

DOWN THE STRETCH

CANADA'S MOST INFORMATIVE AND ENTERTAINING HORSE RACING NEWSPAPER

It was Safe Conduct for
the 162nd Queen's Plate
Page 4



Michael Burns Photo

ALSO INSIDE

Fascinators	Page 2	Cartoon	Page 9	Women Drivers	Page 14-15	Dark Horse Bets	Page 21
Oaks & Plate Trial	Page 5	Eurico Rosa da Silva	Page 10	Ajax Downs	Page 16	Chantal Sutherland	Page 21
Woodbine Stakes	Pages 6-7	Husbands & Wilson	Page 11	Frank Hunt	Page 17	Mark Casse	Page 23
Weyburn	Page 8	DQ X 2 in Jersey	Page 12	Sydney Weaver	Page 18	Ismael Mosqueira	Page 24
Navarro	Page 8	Podcast episodes	Page 13	Scott Reid	Page 19	Oddities & Entities	Page 25

AIRPORT NISSAN

The All-New 2022 NISSAN

Pathfinder[®]

Bigger, Bolder and soon-to-be dirtier

NISSAN INTELLIGENT MOBILITY



- ▶ 284-HP V6 ALL-NEW 9-SPEED AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION
- ▶ UP TO 6,000 LBS OF MAXIMUM TOWING CAPACITY
- ▶ STANDARD SAFETY SHIELD[®] 360
- ▶ 7 TERRAIN MODES
- ▶ NEW DIGITAL DISPLAYS AND SEAMLESS CONNECTIVITY
- ▶ AVAILABLE HEAD UP DISPLAY

NOW IN STOCK AND READY FOR DELIVERY!



3095 Queen Street East, Brampton, ON L6T 5V5

905.791.4900

AirportNissan.com



Starting at \$43,798 MSRP (Plus Freight & All Taxes)

Q¹⁶²¹P QUEEN'S PLATE '21
WOOLBINE RACETRACK, AUGUST 17



THE EDITOR WEIGHS IN



nor-mal

/ 'nôrməl -

conforming to a standard; usual, typical, or expected, ordinary, conventional, unexceptional, average, commonplace, run-of-the-mill

Peter Gross, editor -
None of the above

I don't like the word "normal". I have never been "normal" and, over the years, have resisted any efforts to become "normal".

It's possible that horse racing in Ontario is slowly returning to a status that resembles what it looked like before the pandemic, but please, let's not use the word "normal" or the "new normal".

The 162nd Queen's Plate was the first in two years that allowed racing fans to attend. Everyone had to book a spot, and around noon, I did see at least one individual who was denied entry because he hadn't reserved in advance. The track lacked the buzz of previous years because there were no Hats and Horses booths or sundry attractions in the large area to the north of the building.

There was however great racing on a hot, steamy day.

We have coverage of a well-run Queen's Plate and all the other Stakes races of the day on page 4. The Canadian Oaks and the Plate Trial fill page 5 and many other Woodbine Stakes are described on pages 6-7.

The word "normal" could be applied to a Stakes race won by jockey Patrick Husbands and trainer Mark Casse. There are multiple examples of that in this paper and on page 11, we remember putting Husbands and Emma-Jayne Wilson on our second cover 13 years ago. If you turn to page 23, you'll see how Casse parlayed incredible success at Woodbine into his induction into the National Horse Racing Hall of Fame in Saratoga. Hey – there is nothing "normal" about a guy winning 13 Sovereign Awards!

Being a racehorse owner is definitely not a "normal" thing to do. Typically (but never in a "normal" fashion),

Down The Stretch gives props to the owners in all three breeds. On page 17, our Thoroughbred Owner Frank Hunt talks about over 40 years in the sport. Our Standardbred Owner (page 18) is the irrepressible Sydney Weaver, who breeds her own winners and whose passion for the game is unrivalled. No one uses the word "normal" to describe Sydney! Then, on page 19, we have Scott Reid, who recently sent out Night Leader to win the Ontario Bred Futurity at Ajax Downs.

You want to veer away from "normal"? Then gravitate towards Eurico Rosa da Silva. On page 10 we celebrate his latest honour – receiving the Avelino Gomez Award for his wonderful race riding and injection of excitement into horse racing.

On page 12, read about a wild day of racing in New Jersey. Nothing is "normal" about the winners of the Haskell Stakes and the Meadowlands Pace both being disqualified on the same day.

We continue to have a small journalistic crush on Chantal Sutherland (our therapist points out this is certainly not "normal"). Sutherland sure got our hearts racing on July 24 when she won 4 races on the same card at Gulfstream (page 21).

Not to take anything away from Safe Conduct, but the Queen's Plate suffered a little from the absence of Weyburn, who would have been the favourite if he'd attended. On page 8 we have Weyburn's disappointing work in the Jim Dandy Stakes at Saratoga, after which Chiefswood Stables elected not to bring him back to Woodbine.

The story in this issue that I like the most is on pages 14-15. I consider it very not "normal" that female drivers are not afforded greater opportunity at harness tracks in this province. The Women's Driving Championship last month at Hanover and Dresden presented 8 strong female teamsters who steer to win and don't grant any favours into the first turn.

This issue also includes Stakes wraps from Ajax Downs (page 16) courtesy of Jennifer Morrison, whose horse race writing rises far above "normal". Defying any sense of "normal" is what happened in New Jersey on August 4 – read on page 12 how the winner of the Haskell Stakes and the winner of the Meadowlands Pace were both disqualified. On page 24, we give you the scoop on jockey Ismael Mosqueira, the triple threat who rides at Ajax Downs, Woodbine and Fort Erie, often all in the same week.

We also have our cartoon on page 9 (layout master Gord Steventon is easily confused) and on page 25, Oddities and Entities, a page of horse racing eccentricities you will not find in any other publication.

Wow! I just re-read the above. How do we jam all this stuff into one paper? Could it be that we're just not... "normal"?

STAFF

PUBLISHERS: Anthony and Milagros Kalloo

EDITOR: Peter Gross

ART DIRECTOR: Gord Steventon

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Eleanor Yeoman LeBlanc

PROOF READER: Susan Nash

WEB MASTER: Robert Gabriele Jr.

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Jennifer Morrison

Our Publication Mail Agreement Number Is 41710012.

Mail:

Down The Stretch
#11-1211 Parkwest Place,
Mississauga, On L5E 3J3

Phone: (905) 990 1171 pgross@rogers.com

DOWN THE STRETCH assumes no responsibility for claims made by advertisers and makes no recommendations as to the purchase or sale of any product, service or other item. All letters or comments sent to DOWN THE STRETCH Newspaper become the sole property of DOWN THE STRETCH Newspaper and may be used and published in any manner whatsoever without limit and without obligation and without liability to the author thereof.

DOWNTHESTRETCH is available at:

Woodbine Racetrack, Woodbine at Mohawk Park, Ajax Downs

SUBSCRIBE to
DOWNTHESTRETCH
Only \$36
a year
pgross@rogers.com

Name _____

Address _____

Make cheque out to Down The Stretch

Send to:

Down The Stretch

1211 Parkwest Place #11

Mississauga, ON

L5E 3J3

The 2021 Queen's Plate: Safe Conduct Was a Most Appropriate Winner



With racing fans in the stands on August 22 to watch the Queen's Plate for the first time in 2 years, safe conduct was the protocol and Safe Conduct, a 3-year-old colt who had never raced at Woodbine, was the winner.

Ridden by Irad Ortiz, the best jockey on the continent, Safe Conduct left comfortably from his rail position as 12 others looked for good early position. Ortiz had Safe Conduct 2nd for the first mile as Take A Chance (Kevah Nicholls) cut out the early fractions of :24.01, :48.37, 1:13.11, and the mile was passed in 1:37.98. By that point, Take A Chance was taking an early nap and retreating, but Safe Conduct was assuming the lead. Ortiz seemed to have control of the race in the deep stretch, but from way back, Riptide Rock (David Moran) was bearing down on the outside. At the wire, Safe Conduct was just a head the best. The time for the mile and a quarter was 2:02.85.

Safe Conduct was an invader. He had won once at both at Saratoga and at Belmont and was making his first start on a synthetic surface.

"He's shown some speed before to the half, :48," said Ortiz Jr., who was riding in his first Plate. "We thought maybe two horses had speed and we wanted to be out of the traffic, so I broke running. I sat second on the clear, I bided my time, waited for the right time to roll and when I asked him to go, he kept fighting down the stretch. He kept moving forward. I saw somebody was flying outside that was very close. I didn't know if I won the race after the wire but thank God I did."

Safe Conduct is owned by WellSpring Stables and trained by Philip Serpe. His breeder, Ontario's Mitchell Kursner was at Woodbine for the racing thrill of his life.

"Blessed," said Kursner. "Blessed. I want to congratulate Dr. Vukevich and the wonderful people at WellSpring. They've done a marvelous job bringing this horse along. And of course, Phil Serpe."

Safe Conduct is now 3-1-0 from seven starts. He broke his maiden in his second engagement, a 1 1/4-length win over the Saratoga turf last August.

"He's been training like a bear," noted Kursner. "The rule of thumb is that if you're a nice horse on the turf, you'll translate on the Tapeta, and we're just delighted. Delighted."

The win by Irad Ortiz was his 243rd in North America, the most of all jockeys, and his horses have earned \$17,309,296. That's also at the top of the charts. Ortiz certainly enjoyed

his visit to Toronto.

"It's a great feeling always to come here. It's my pleasure," he said. "I've got a lot of fans. They showed me some love. I really enjoyed it."

Safe Conduct returned \$8.

Our Flash Drive Was Plugged In



Ever heard of a horse trained by Mark Casse and ridden by Patrick Husbands winning a Stakes race? The Grade 3 \$150,000 Ontario Colleen Stakes at a mile on the grass for 3-year-old fillies was one of 3 Stakes on the Queen's Plate undercard, and it was the Casse-Husbands combo that claimed the big part of the purse.

Our Flash Drive broke well and was positioned second, as Sweet Souper Sweet, also owned by Live Oak Plantation, grabbed the lead in the one-mile turf tilt, and took her rivals through an opening quarter mile in :24.42 and to the half in :48.35. In the long E.P. Taylor Turf stretch, Husbands had Our Flash Drive rolling. With apparent ease, she separated herself from her rivals, scoring by 1 1/2 lengths in 1:34.76 over firm going under humid conditions.

"I breezed her last Sunday," said Husbands. "When I got back to the barn, my head was bigger than Woodbine. I said 'Mark, this is a Breeders' Cup horse.' She just loved the turf She's the type of filly that, what you want to do, she'll let you do. But she's pretty savvy racing and you can decide what to do with her."

Owned by Live Oak Plantation, Our Flash Drive won for the 3rd time in 5 starts and paid \$6.90 to win.

Mutamakina Danced Smartly

Saratoga based jockey, Dylan Davis flew into Toronto for the singular assignment of riding Mutamakina in the \$180,950 Grade 3 Dance Smartly Stakes over 1 1/4 miles on the E.P. Taylor Turf Course and he didn't waste the trip.

Mutamakina stalked the early leader Alnaseen (David Moran) for the better part of the first mile, then cruised to the lead at the top of the stretch. As the 5-year-old mare approached the wire, there was a late threat from Etoile (Irad Ortiz). But Mutamakina held on by a half length in 2:01.26

"I saw the four-horse had some good speed," said Davis about his first Woodbine Stakes win. "I broke well and was able to get a good stalking position right there. I had to get into her early. I was a little worried about that. Once she straightened up, she saw where she needed to go, and she ran



very strongly to the wire."

Trained by Christophe Clement and Owned by Al Shira'aa Farms, Mutamakina paid \$8.80

Silent Poet Makes Tote Board Noise in the Highlander



The bettors made Caravel and Irad Ortiz the 1-2 favourite in the Grade 1 \$395,500 Highlander Stakes, but it was longshot Silent Poet and Justin Stein pulling off the upset in the 6-furlong grass race.

Stein had Silent Poet close in 3rd after a quarter in :22.35, and after a half mile in :45.16, the 6-year-old gelding was moving to the leader. Silent Poet got a short lead in the stretch and was able to parlay that into a half-length win over Admiralty Pier (Antonio Gallardo) in 1:07.98.

The win gave trainer Nick Gonzalez his first Grade 1 conquest.

"When the overnight came out and we had the eight-hole, Justin came by in the morning and said, 'Nick, I think we're going to be able to get a nice trip today.' Everything worked out," said Gonzalez.

The \$21.90 payoff to win is a little weird, considering that Silent Poet has now won 11 of his 22 starts. He is owned by Stronach Stables.

Woodbine reported that the days handle was \$16,122,170, the second highest amount bet on a Queen's Plate card. The 2019 Plate took in \$18,005,917.

The Oaks and the Plate Trial – the fillies went much faster



Jockey Justin Stein gave Munnyfo Ro a patient, well-timed ride, and that translated into an impressive win in the 66th Woodbine Oaks, which offered \$500,000 at Woodbine on August 1.

Lorena (Gary Boulanger) took up the early running, leading the field of 10 fillies to the half in :48.41, at which point she decided to take a nap and receded from the battle. Emmeline (Emma-Jayne Wilson) took a brief lead at the head of the stretch, but Munnyfo Ro had the most momentum and swept by in the lane to win by 1 ¼ lengths in 1:50.31.

“I was told the key with her is to have her settled,” noted Stein. “The pace looked like there was probably some possibility of them stopping, which we didn’t want to be in



behind them. I put her in a spot that we could tip out in the turn when it came time to ask her to run from the quarter-pole home. We had a dream trip – worked out perfect.”

For trainer Kevin Attard, this was his first Oaks win. Stein prevailed in 2015 with Academic.

“We were expecting a good performance out of her,” said Attard. “She came up here this season in good shape from Brian Lynch – had a great campaign over the wintertime. She ran a fabulous race to be 2nd in the Selene. I thought she’d move off that race forwardly enough to kind of be really competitive here today. Had a good interim breeze and put it all together.”

Rajendra Maharajh, owner of Raroma Stable, had multiple reasons to celebrate. He named Munnyfor Ro after his son, ‘Ro’ and the filly got all the glory the same day that Maharajh’s mother celebrated her 80th birthday.

“My good buddy Art Fisher from Ocala picked her out for me,” said Maharajh. “She came up here last year and

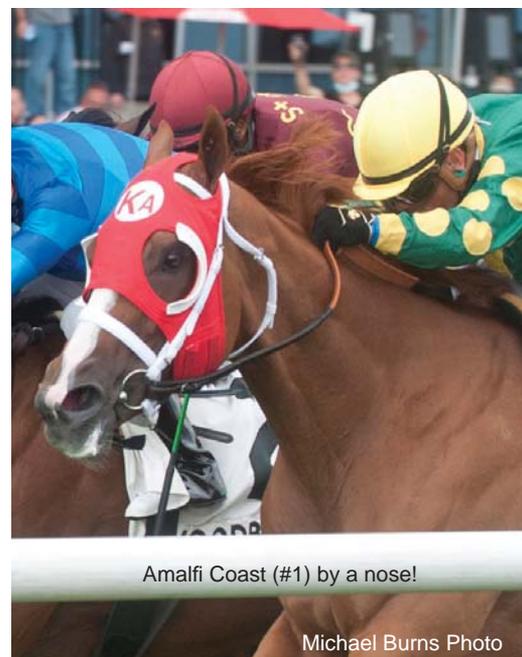
ran two races. She was a little immature at the time. We sent her down to Florida and gave her the winter off, and then with COVID, my other trainer, Brian Lynch, took her over and prepped her up and we were always planning for this race. Brian did a fabulous job getting her ready and then she came over just about a month ago and Kevin did the final touches on her and he did a fabulous job.”

Earlier in the card, the \$150,000 Plate Trial was conducted and only 4 colts contested the mile and an eighth, and none of them seemed to be in a hurry. Derzkii (Emma-Jayne Wilson) led the compact group to the half in a pokey



:51.06 and the first 6 furlongs took a dawdling 1:15.93. That’s when Antonio Gallardo prompted Avoman to take over and that one carried his lead to the wire, winning by ¾ of a length over Truffle King (Justin Stein) in 1:52.84, 2 ½ seconds slower than the 9 furlongs galloped out by the fillies in the Oaks. After an objection, Truffle King was disqualified for impeding Derzkii in the stretch and placed last of the four.

Appropriate research worked for Gallardo who was just



in his first week as a new arrival at Woodbine.

“I love to watch replays, I love to know my horses,” said Gallardo, who won his second Woodbine stakes one day after taking the My Dear with Diabolic. “I could see I have a long-stride horse – he has a big kick at the end. I had to move a little bit early because there was no pace. I wanted to make sure the horse in front worked a little bit.”

Avoman was bred by Joey Gee Thoroughbreds, and he is trained by Donald MacRae who shares ownership with La Huerta Inc. Avoman paid \$5.10 to win.

No 5-peat for Pink Lloyd

The amazing 9-year-old Pink Lloyd had won 4 previous runnings of the \$159,300 Vigil Stakes, but on August 1, Souper Stonehenge was the better horse. The bettors felt good about Souper Stonehenge, pounding him down to 1-5 and Patrick Husbands rode accordingly, leading the field of 6 from start to finish with fractions of :22.96, :45.73 and winning the race in 1:09.52.

Pink Lloyd had a strange trip. He was close early, dropped to last, then found his best stride in the final furlong, missing by less than a length.

This was trainer Mark Casse’s 6th Stakes win of the meet and the 5th for Husbands.

“It’s good to sit on light horses and good to sit on good horses,” said Husbands “I have confidence in this horse. I just left him alone. It worked out good today.”

Owner by Live Oak Plantation, Souper Stonehenge paid just \$2.70.

Amalfi Coast Gets Up by a Nose in the Royal North

It may well have been the greatest 45 minutes in Kevin Attard’s training career. He won the 8th race at Woodbine with Munnyfo Ro in the Woodbine Oaks, then in the 9th race, watched an amazing stretch run by Amalfi Coast to win the Royal North at 6 furlongs on the grass.

At the top of the stretch, anyone holding a ticket on Amalfi Coast could not be bursting with confidence as the 5-year-old filly was 4th and jockey Justin Stein was looking for a seam.

Jeanie B (Antonio Gallardo) had the lead and looked strong. After guiding Amalfi Coast to the centre of the course, Stein took her back along the hedge and in the final 16th, she turned it on. Both Amalfi Coast and Jeanie B hit the wire together and the photo showed just a fraction of Amalfi Coast’s nose on the wire ahead of a very brave Jeanie B.

“When I pulled the trigger, she gave me everything she’s got,” said Stein. “She came over ready and is a pleasure to be around. She’s a really nice horse.”

Amalfi Coast is owned by Don Romeo’s Terra Racing Stable, and this was her 5th Stakes win. The only one of her 6 career wins that wasn’t a Stakes was her maiden breaker.

“It’s a funny game,” said Attard. “She’s a special horse. Last year she ran into some issues – some bad luck and a little throat issue early on. I kind of mismanaged her maybe a little bit wrong, so this year we came in with a different game plan. She’s really appreciated that and she’s showing the horse that she’s capable of being.”

Amalfi Coast returned \$9.60 for a \$2 win ticket.

Woodbine Stakes

Longest Shot Takes the Ballade

Thanks to two scratches, only 4 horses competed in the \$100,000 Ballade stakes for fillies and mares at 6 furlongs on July 17, and Golden Vision, ridden by Omar Moreno, took the least money, going off at more than 6-1. Summer Sunday (Rafael Hernandez) went off as the 6-5 choice, and led after a half in :46.06. But in the stretch, Moreno had Golden Vision running the best, and overhauling the leader late in the lane to win by ½ a length in 1:10.75.

Golden Vision is trained by Tino Attard and owned by Elizabeth and Gordon Lickrish. This was the 5th win in 14 starts for the 5-year-old son of Court Vision and he returned \$14.90.



Avie's Flatter Connaught Be Beaten

The \$175,000 Connaught Stakes for older horses was the first Turf Stakes race of the year at Woodbine, as a field of 8 was asked to go 7 furlongs.

Silent Poet (Justin Stein) was the defending champion, and he led for the first half, hitting that pole in :46.16, at



which point he started to retreat. A three-wide move on the turn got Avie's Flatter rolling, and at the head of the stretch, he had the lead. A late push from Olympic Runner (Rafael Hernandez) made it close, but Avie's Flatter held on by a neck in 1:20.99. Avie's Flatter's first race of the year was a 5 ½ length win on the Tapeta.

"I just wanted to sit behind the speed, and he was just dragging me the whole way," said Contreras. "He runs good whatever the surface is."

"This is a really special horse and it's very exciting for us because he's finally come back to himself," said winning trainer Josie Carroll. "He's just a monster this year."

That's 6 wins in 15 starts for Avie's Flatter who is owned by Ivan Dalos. The win bettors got \$5.60.

Jolie Olimpica in the Nassau

For those happy that the Olympic Games started on July 24, it was wholly appropriate that Jolie Olimpica, a 5-year-old mare, outran 11 fillies and mares to take down the \$175,000 Grade 2 Nassau Stakes contested over a mile on



the E.P. Taylor Turf Course that same day.

Jolie Olimpica, under Luis Contreras, stalked the pacesetter Honey Cake (Antonio Gallardo) through fractions of :23.94, :47.63 and 1:10.69, before making a 3-wide move on the turn that put her in front. Jolie Olimpica was able to maintain her advantage to the wire, winning by ¾ of a length in 1:34.83 over the "firm" course.

"She was so nice and great the whole way," said winning jockey Luis Contreras. "I was confident every single step of the way."

Trained by Josie Carroll for Fox Hill Farms, Jolie Olimpica won for the 6th time in 10 races and has never been worse than 3rd. She paid \$5.30 to win.

Marching to Victory

A patient ride by Patrick Husbands delivered March To The Arch to the winner's circle in the \$100,000 Niagara Stakes on June 25. Nine colts and geldings raced a mile and an eighth on the E.P. Taylor Turf Course and down



the backstretch, Admiralty Pier (Steven Bahen) and Primo Touch (Sunny Singh) were battling for command, and they spurred away from the rest of the field by more than 10 lengths. When it counted though, Husbands had March To The Arch rolling late, and he flew past the tiring leaders as he galloped to a decisive win by 4 ½ lengths in 1:45.15.

"He's classy. Everybody would like to ride a horse like him," said Husbands. "He's got a serious, serious turn of foot."

March To The Arch is trained by Mark Casse for Live Oak Plantation and his popular conquest was worth just \$4.40 on the win ticket.

Lady War Machine Wowed Them All



Patrick Husbands gunned Lady War Machine early, challenged for the lead to the half, then took over for an emphatic 3-length win in the \$100,000 Alywow Stakes on July 31.

Lady War Machine harassed Hard Street (Omar Moreno) through a :46.08 half mile, then shook clear at the top of the stretch, stopping the clock in 1:15.40 for the 6 ½ furlongs on the turf.

Trained by Josie Carroll for Mark Dodson, Lady War Machine won for the 2nd time in her 3-race career. In her previous race, she romped by 7 ½ lengths in a 6-furlong main track maiden special weight event. The win ticket in the Alywow was \$6.10.

It Was Diabolic, My Dear



Coming off the pace was the key for Diabolic, who carried Antonio Gallardo to victory in the \$125,000 My Dear Stakes on July 31. There was a field of eight 2-year-old fillies asked to go 5 ½ furlongs, and Royal Engagement (Kazushi Kimura) led to the half in :45.70. As the field came into the stretch, that lead was gone, and Diabolic was surging from the back half of the field to take the lead with less than 1/8th of a mile to go. At the wire, Diabolic was safe by 2 ¼ lengths in 1:04.15.

A little misbehaviour before the gates opened didn't affect the filly's determination.

"She was sitting down in the gate, and I was a little nervous on how she'd be breaking," said Gallardo, who picked up his first Woodbine stakes win. "I wanted to be saving ground and following the speed. Really, she did everything perfect. When I pulled her in the clear, I asked, and she gave me 100 percent. She's a nice filly."

Diabolic is trained by Mark Casse for D.K. Stable and Nexus Racing Club and she paid \$9.20.

One Timer Not Just a One-trick Pony

That's two straight impressive wins for the inaccurately named One Timer. Ridden by E.T. Baird, One Timer smoked 6 other 2-year-old fillies in the \$125,000 Victoria Stakes at 5

½ furlongs on July 31.

One Timer crushed in his debut – a 12 ½ length maiden breaking score at Arlington Park at 5 furlongs on June 26. And he certainly didn't bounce second time out, wiring the field, and winning by 2 ¾ lengths in the excellent time of 1:03.33 – just .63 off the course record.

Before the race, Baird was not as confident as the bettors who pounded One Timer down to 3-5.



“In the post parade, he was getting awfully shook up,” said Baird. “But you have to take into consideration that he was shipped up here, he's at a different racetrack, and he's never seen it. That being said, I think he did a great job. He's a really, really nice horse. He's got a high cruising speed.”

Trained by Larry Rivelli and owned by Richard Ravin and Patricia's Hope LLC, One Timer paid \$3.20.

She Danced to the Win

On Saturday, August 7, the \$80,000 Georgian Bay Stakes was for 3-year-old fillies going 5 furlongs on the inner turf. Artful Ballerina with Emma-Jayne Wilson was making her 3rd career start and looking for a first win. Wilson had the filly 5th, but pretty close approaching the far turn, when the filly took an awkward step and dropped back. Even at that short distance, Artful Ballerina was able to regain her stride and Wilson drove her artfully up the



inside in the final 50 yards to win by 2 lengths in :56.96. William Sorokolit bred Artful Ballerina and shares ownership with Vandy Sunny Stables. Darwin Banach is the trainer and Artful Ballerina paid \$14.30.

You Could See the Forest



The 3-year-old boys also ran for \$80,000 in the Lake Huron Stakes, also 5 panels on the lawn. Kazushi Kimura took the favourite, Forest Survivor, right to the top and his 4 rivals never got past him. Forest Survivor found the wire first by 1 ¾ lengths in :57.33, which means, even with her stumble, the filly Artful Ballerina would have won this heat

easily. Forest Survivor is owned by Bruno Schickedanz and trained by Norm McKnight. This was his 2nd straight win and made him 3 for 8. Forest Survivor paid \$3.10.

Gretzky was Great Enough



Gretzky the Great, the 2020 Sovereign Award Two-Year-Old of the Year, needed every tool in his box to win the \$125,000 Greenwood Stakes on August 14. Running here instead of the Queen's Plate was supposed to be an easier assignment against 6 others at 7 furlongs on the turf, but Gretzky the Great didn't exactly skate away for the victory.

Under Kazushi Kimura, Gretzky the Great eased past Red River Rebel (Rafael Hernandez) around the far turn to assume the lead, but in the stretch, both Artie's Storm (David Moran) and County Final (Luis Contreras) loomed up with menace in the middle of the track. Both of those appeared likely to pass, but Gretzky the Great refused to yield and was a head better than County Final at the wire in the very good time of 1:20.70 for the distance.

Gretzky the Great has won 4 of his 8 races, all 4 wins coming at Woodbine. He is trained by Mark Casse for Gary Barber and Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners, and he paid \$4.90.

A Gold Medal Performance for Olympic Runner

Olympic Runner was not the people's choice in the Grade 2 \$175,000 King Edward Stakes on August 15, but he sure was respected after a mile on the grass. Off at more than 7-1, Olympic Runner, under Rafael Hernandez, was 5th at the half as Town Cruise (Daisuke Fukumoto), seemed to be having his way on the front end, leading by open lengths into the stretch. But Hernandez saved ground along the inside, and when the front runners started to gasp, Olympic Runner burst into the lead in the late stretch and hit the wire a winner by 1 ¼ lengths. The time of 1:31.73 was 2/100ths of a second faster than the record previously set by the remarkable Wise Dan in the 2013 Woodbine Mile.

“The main thing was to get a clear trip,” said Hernandez. “We got a long stretch, and it helped a lot today.” This was Olympic Runner's 5th win in 23 tries. He is trained by Mark Casse and owned by Gary Barber. It was a good weekend for that pair as they swept the two Stakes at Woodbine. Olympic Runner paid \$16.80 to win.

“The main thing was to get a clear trip,” said Hernandez. “We got a long stretch, and it helped a lot today.”

Empire Soared Free



First Empire was first at the wire

The first of four Stakes on Saturday, August 21, was for 2-year-old colts and geldings going 6 ½ furlongs on the grass. Patrick Husbands moved First Empire to the lead just past the half and First Empire galloped strong to the finish line, winning by 1 ¾ lengths in 1:15.44. The colt is owned by Harlequin Ranches and trained by Mark Casse. The win ticket was \$7.80.

A Diabolic Victory



Diabolic did what she needed to do

He was 7th at the half in the \$150,000 Catch A Glimpse Stakes, but at the wire after 6 ½ on the grass, the two-year-old filly Diabolic was first by an open length in 1:15.81 for jockey Antonio Gallardo. That was two straight Stakes races in which the winning horse was trained by Mark Casse. Diabolic is owned by DJ Stables Nexus Racing Club. The win ticket was \$4.30

Corelli Was Really Good



The Grade 3 Singpiel Stakes was at 1 ¼ miles on the turf for 3-year-olds and up, with a purse of \$180,000. Corelli got a masterful ride from Kazushi Kimura, Woodbine's leading jockey. Corelli was 8th after 6 furlongs, but Kimura orchestrated an efficient route along the inside, allowing Corelli to assume the lead in mid-stretch, and the pair prevailed by 1 ¾ lengths in the good time of 2:01.70. Corelli is a 6-year-old gelding trained by Jonathan Thomas who trains for the Augustin Stable. The win ticket was worth \$9.60.

Boardroom Conducted Her Own Meeting



Boardroom made a big decision

Boardroom, a 4-year-old filly ridden by Luis Contreras won the \$180,000 Seaways Stakes at 7 furlongs on the Tapeta. Toffen (Rafael Hernandez) led the field of 7 to the half in :46.39, then retreated swiftly as Boardroom circled the field around the far turn, took the lead as the horses straightened for home and won by a widening 4 ½ lengths in 1:22.02. That was Boardroom's 5th win in 7 starts. She is trained by Josie Carroll and owned by LNJ Foxwoods, and she paid \$4.40.

Weyburn Way Back in the Jim Dandy

Essential Quality in the Jim Dandy



Chiefswood Stables' Canadian-bred 3-year-old Weyburn was one of only 5 horses in the \$600,000 Jim Dandy Stakes at Saratoga on July 31. The distance, a mile and an 8th, was the same as the Queen's Plate Trial conducted the following day.

Jockey Irad Ortiz put Weyburn in the mix early, maybe a couple of lengths behind the early leader, longshot Dr. Jack

(José Ortiz). The race's 2-5 favourite, Essential Quality was wide for most of the race, but Luis Saez kept the Belmont Stakes winner out of trouble.

Around the far turn, Masqueparade (Miguel Mena) surged to a brief lead and Weyburn appeared to have momentum, just a head behind. But those two were no match for a

barrelling Essential Quality who gobbled up the pair at the top of the stretch. In the lane, Essential Quality had to repel a late moving Keepmeinmind (Joel Rosario) who got within a half length but no closer. Essential Quality was the winner in 1:49.92. Weyburn flattened out in the final 8th and was 4th, defeated by about 8 lengths.

The win makes Essential Quality 7 for 8 in his career. His only loss was a 4th place finish in the Kentucky Derby, in which he was heavily bumped at the start. Trainer Brad Cox, the 2020 Eclipse Award winner, heaped praise on his horse after the Jim Dandy.

"We had a horse slip up inside him that looked like he had some run left, so it made for some anxious moments down the lane," said Cox said "But overall he was very determined and had the heart of a champion. He's a very good horse – he's able to dig in and fight and move on."

"I saw Keepmeinmind, but I had a lot of horse, and I knew my horse was going to finish," Saez said. "He always fights, and he always wants to win."

The time for the Jim Dandy was not too special. It was slower than 17 of the last 21 versions of the race. Essential Quality won the 9-furlong Blue Grass Stakes at Keeneland in April in 1:48.50, which translates to about 9 lengths faster than he ran on the last day in July. Weyburn's time would be about 1:51.3.

Essential Quality, off his perfect 3 for 3 rookie season, was the 2-Year-Old Horse of the Year according to the Eclipse Awards.

He is owned by Godolphin, and he paid just \$2.80 to win. Attendance at Saratoga that Saturday was announced as 38,840 and the total wagering was \$31,772,948.

Navarro Admits It



Faced with overwhelming evidence of his guilt, 46-year-old Jorge Navarro pleaded guilty on August 10 to a charge that he had been secretly injecting illegal medication into his horses for years. In whispered tones between conspirators, some of the juices used were called "monkey" or "red acid". Navarro is just one of many men implicated in a scandalous and wire-racing doping

scheme in which horses were poisoned for the purpose of running faster and winning huge Stakes races.

Navarro certainly won't get off lightly for his guilty plea. Apparently, he has promised to cough up \$26 million in penalties, an amount determined based on purse winnings obtained through his nefarious and illegal activities.

"As he admitted today, Navarro, a licensed trainer and the purported 'winner' of major races across the world, was in fact a reckless fraudster whose veneer of success relied on the systematic abuse of the animals under his control," said Audrey Strauss, acting U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York.

Navarro, born in Panama, was the top trainer at Monmouth Park in New Jersey 7 times, and was leading all trainers at Gulfstream Racetrack when he was nailed with multiple charges of injecting banned substances into his horses. Unofficially, he was often referred to as the "juice man".

Prior to Navarro's guilty plea, veterinarian Kristian Rhein also pleaded guilty. He was charged with supplying illegal and mislabelled substances to Navarro and 14 others, all of whom face charges.

As part of Navarro's pathetic resumé, there is the

tragic story of a horse named XY Jet. In March of 2019, as a 7-year-old, XY Jet won the Grade 1 Dubai Golden Shaheen, which had a purse of \$2,000,000. Ten months later, Navarro announced that XY Jet had died from a heart attack. Prosecutors accused Navarro of injecting an illegal substance into XY Jet before the Golden Shaheen. There appears to be evidence that other horses trained by Navarro died in ways not typical of a racehorse.

The vet, Rhein, was accused of participating in the drugging of Maximum Security. That horse finished first in the 2019 Kentucky Derby, but was famously disqualified for interference around the far turn. More egregious than that is the evidence that Maximum Security was shot full of performance enhancing stuff before his eye-popping win in the Saudi Cup on February 29, 2020. Astute horse players were certainly scratching their heads at the horse's incredible ability to "re-break" at least twice in the race, when typically a horse would start to retreat.

At that time, Maximum Security was trained by Jason Servis, who is also facing charges. After the Saudi Cup, Maximum Security was taken out of Servis' care and given to trainer Bob Baffert, who is facing legal trauma of his own.

Navarro is set to be sentenced on Dec. 17. Rhein faces sentencing on Dec. 2.



RACETRACK HUMOUR



When our cartoonist misunderstood our request for a Queen's Plate angle...

Eurico Rosa da Silva named 2021 Avelino Gomez Memorial Award recipient



PHOTO BY MICHAEL BURNS

Eurico Rosa da Silva, one of Canadian Thoroughbred racing's most accomplished riders and popular personalities, has been named the 2021 recipient of the Avelino Gomez Memorial Award.

The coveted Gomez Award is given to the person, Canadian-born, Canadian-raised or regular rider in the country for more than five years, who has made significant contributions to the sport.

It is named in memory of one of the sport's most heralded and loved performers. The Cuban-born Gomez died of complications after a three-horse accident in the 1980 Canadian Oaks.

The 46-year-old da Silva, now retired, is no doubt a worthy recipient of the award.

Da Silva won a slew of several impressive awards and high-profile races over the course of an outstanding career, including a pair of Queen's Plate triumphs, and stirring upset scores in the Grade 1 Ricoh Woodbine Mile and Grade 1 Pattison Canadian International.

His catchphrase, "Good Luck To Everybody," was always accompanied by a wide smile, and a look that embodied an unabashed love for all things horse racing.

Da Silva now has another reason to flash that winning smile, as this year's Gomez honouree. He ranks the distinction as one of the most treasured moments associated with his life in the saddle.

"What a nice surprise! Jessica Buckley [Woodbine Entertainment SVP, Standardbred & Thoroughbred Racing] called and told me. I was so happy," said da Silva. "I didn't expect this, but I feel very lucky.. "I didn't expect this, but I feel very lucky. This is a great award. I am so thrilled. I feel like I know Avelino. I have heard so many stories about him. I've heard how great he was as a rider and how the fans loved him. So, to win this award that is named after one of the best riders, it is amazing."

Born in Sao Paulo, Brazil, da Silva launched his career in his homeland before moving to Macau. He counts the Brazil Derby, a two-mile Group 1 turf race, among his most memorable early triumphs.

Upon his arrival at Woodbine in 2004, da Silva's stated goal was to become the racetrack's leading rider. He wasted no time in putting his plan in motion.

He recorded his first Woodbine victory on May 20, 2004,

teaming with Point Hidden, a bay son of Tale of the Cat, for a half-length win over 5 furlongs on the main track.

From there, da Silva began his steady ascent in the jockey standings.

Da Silva first topped the standings in 2010 and won the riding title from 2015-2019. In 2018, he set the record for most wins in a single meet at Woodbine with 237 victories.

A seven-time Sovereign Award winner as Canada's Outstanding Jockey, he has victories in all three legs of the Canadian Triple Crown, including consecutive editions of The Queen's Plate in 2009 and 2010, with Eye of the Leopard, and Big Red Mike, respectively.

In 2017, he teamed with longshot Bullards Alley to win the Grade 1 Ricoh Woodbine Mile. Two years later, he engineered another upset, this time with El Tormenta in the Grade 1 Pattison Canadian International. He was a part of the Horse of the Year campaigns by Pink Lloyd (2017), Up With the Birds (2013), Biofuel (2010) and Fatal Bullet (2008).

Da Silva, who won his final stakes race with Pumpkin Rumble in the 2019 Valedictory Stakes, also made a name for himself on the international stage.

A lifetime winner of 2,286 races, da Silva bested his rivals to reign victorious in the 2017 World All-Star Jockeys Championship in Japan.

Now, he can add another cherished piece of hardware to his trophy case.

"When I look back on my career, I wanted to be a good rider, but I also wanted to help in the community as well," said da Silva, who released his autobiography, 'Riding For Freedom,' in late 2020, and now works as a Certified Mind Coach.

"The fans, the community around Woodbine, all of it is important to me. This honour made me reflect on my career and all the great people and horses I connected with. What it makes me think about is every day that I walked into the jocks' room and how happy I was to do that. So many great riders, like Avelino, were there. I was proud to be able to walk into that room and be part of one of the toughest jockey colonies in the world. Woodbine is so competitive. When you are able to accomplish your dreams, it is very rewarding." To commemorate his contributions to the sport, a life-size statue of Gomez, who called Toronto home and raised a family there, keeps watch over Woodbine's walking ring. A replica is presented to each year's honouree.

Although presented annually on Woodbine Oaks day at Woodbine (August 1 this year), this year's ceremony will take place on September 19 at Woodbine. With attendance currently limited to due COVID restrictions, the September date will allow more fans to share in the festivities.

Da Silva joins Ron Turcotte, Johnny Longden, Sandy Hawley, Don MacBeth, Chris Rogers, Jeff Fell, Lloyd Duffy, Hugo Dittfach, Robin Platts, Larry Attard, Don Seymour, David Gall, Richard Grubb, Irwin Driedger, David Clark, Jim McKnight, Chris Loseth, Richard Dos Ramos, Robert Landry, Francine Villeneuve, Sam Krasner, John LeBlanc Sr., George Ho Sang, Jack Lauzon, Robert King Jr., Stewart Elliott, Emile Ramsammy, Steve Bahen, Mickey Walls, Patrick Husbands, Quincy Welch, Gary Stahlbaum, Gary Boulanger, Emma-Jayne Wilson and Frank Barroby as Gomez honourees.

Winning the 2019 Ricoh Woodbine Mile with El Tormenta.



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL BURNS

Passing the Test of Longevity



You're looking at the cover of our 2nd issue, published in April of 2008. We had the brilliant idea of making jockeys Patrick Husbands and Emma-Jayne Wilson face-off as a preview to the riders' competition that year. It's been more than 13 years since that image appeared, and this is the 125th issue of **Down The Stretch**.

Dozens of jockeys have come and gone at Woodbine, but, incredibly, both Husbands and Wilson are still here, still riding with a very high level of skill, and still in demand by trainers and owners. Back in 2008, Husbands and Jim McAleney were neck and neck until the final day of racing. On that last day, Husbands won the first two races, at which point, a stinging north wind, combined with sub-zero temperatures, caused the rest of the card to be cancelled. Husbands was crowned the champion with 166 wins to McAleney's 160. Wilson won 115 races in 2008.

There was good reason to put Husbands and Wilson on the cover that month. Patrick had just won his 5th Sovereign Award as the country's top jockey. Wilson had won 2 Sovereigns as top apprentice, and in 2006, she copped the Eclipse Award as the outstanding apprentice in North America. In addition, Wilson was the defending Queen's Plate champion jockey – in 2007, she made history by winning Canada's most prestigious race aboard Mike Fox.

To point out the consistency and determination of both Husbands and Wilson, in our story back in April 2008, we identified Emile Ramsammy, Corey Fraser and Todd Kabel as other contenders to the riding crown. Ramsammy is still riding, mostly at Fort Erie, Fraser is retired, and Kabel has shuffled off this mortal coil.

Husbands and Wilson are spectacular examples of athletes with a high threshold for pain and a remarkable ability to heal. Wilson has suffered some serious injuries. One time, Wilson says she was out of commission for three months with a laceration to her liver after being run over by a horse. She hurt herself in a fall just before opening day in 2018 and that kept her out of action for 3 months. On September 8, 2019, she was aboard a 3-year-old filly, Notice Me, who broke down in the first race on the E.P. Taylor Turf Course. Wilson, typically, tweeted

about the damage to her body:

"I sustained fractures of my right hand and left clavicle; I am meeting with surgeons this week to make plans and will share updates soon."

Husbands, unfortunately, has incurred repeated damage to the lower half of his body, and the long-term consequences have been made clear to him. On May 22, his horse, A Tough Buck, collapsed just after the finish line, tossing Husbands. The jockey suffered a broken ankle and was unable to ride for almost 4 months.

"I broke my ankle," he says. "I shattered my leg under the knee. They put a plate in it with 4 screws. They put a rod in it."

On November 5, 2018, a horse named Islay Inlet acted up before the race, and when Husbands was dislodged, he incurred a broken pelvis. "After I broke my hip, they had to rebuild it with steel. I'm just a walking soldier," he says, laughing.

He wouldn't ride a horse competitively again until April 27, and typically, he won in his return on a horse called Blueblood.

Now 48, he insists there's still a lot of fire inside.

"I'm still at my peak, because I love it," he claims. "I would say that if everyone was complaining every time I rode a horse, I would know it is time to get out. But I'm not at that point yet."

Husbands, famously, has said that even if he wasn't paid, he would still be doing this.

"It is something I love," he says. "Money comes with anything you do. I was raised on a farm with pigs, cows and sheep and every day from the time I was 7, I was riding, riding, riding. Now they pay me to ride horses and I love it."

Incredibly, after the ankle injury in 2013, Husbands rode brilliantly, winning 170 races and his 5th Woodbine riding title which led to an 8th Sovereign Award as Canada's Outstanding Jockey. In retrospect, however, he concedes his hard work brought him dangerously close to disaster.

"When I came back, I worked so hard, the leg was inflamed from the steel I had in the leg," he says. "I was

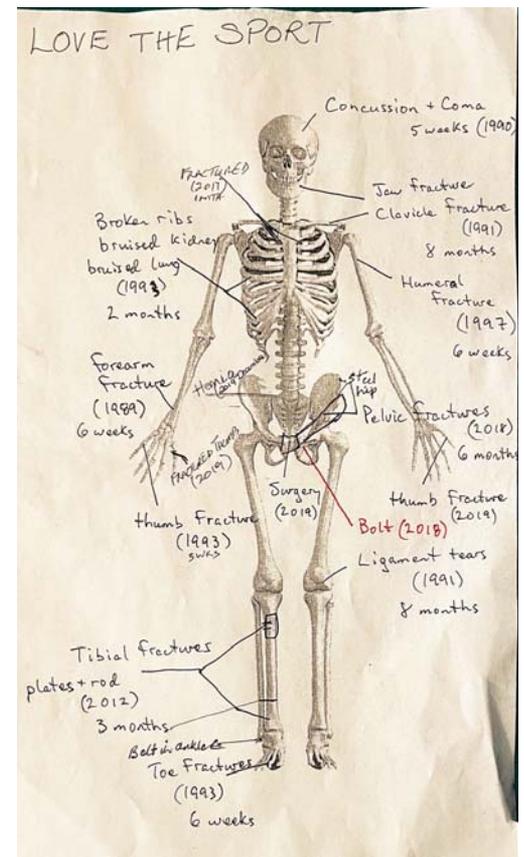
jumping on and off so many times, riding 8, 9, 10 horses a day. At the end of the year, I went back to the surgeons, and they told me if I wanted to compete at the top level, I better quit because I would lose the leg."

Have a look at the image of the skeleton that Husbands provided to **Down The Stretch**. It's a diary of the injuries he's sustained: concussion, broken ribs, fractured jaw, broken forearm, broken humerus, pelvic fracture, two thumb fractures, torn ligament, plates and rod in his lower leg, and a broken toe.

Putting an end to his race riding is simply not an option for Husbands. His compromise is to continue to compete, but selectively. If 3 or 4 mounts a day keep him in the game, it's what he will do. Husbands admits that it's unlikely he will ever record the most wins at Woodbine again. The math is against him.

"I can't compete to be a champion again," he says. "I could do it, but it would be the end of my career. If I rode 10 races a day, I could win the championship, but at the end of the year, I might lose my leg. I'm not ready for that."

Even with that concession, Husbands is having a sensational season. As of August 11, he had 19 wins from just 136 mounts. His strike rate of 21% is the best of all the riders. Wilson is battling Kazushi Kimura for the lead – she had 37 wins to Kimura's 38. Wilson had accepted



205 rides to reach those wins.

Since we published that picture more than 13 years ago, Husbands has won 1,614 races. Wilson had posed in the winner's circle 1,215 times.

And don't bother asking either one about retirement, because it's not happening soon.

Husband's numbers on Equibase don't tell the whole story. Many wins in Barbados, Trinidad and Martinique simply aren't included. As of August 23, Husbands is credited with 3,474 wins.

Double DQ Saturday in Jersey



Paco Lopez got knocked off Midnight Bourbon

It was an unprecedented day in horse racing on July 17. In less than 5 hours, there were disqualifications of the winner in two huge and important Stakes races in New Jersey. At Monmouth Park, it was the \$1 million Haskell Stakes at a mile and an eighth. The 4-5 favourite in the field of 7 was Hot Rod Charlie, ridden by Flavien Prat, and though he got to the wire first by a nose over Mandaloun (Florent Geroux), celebrations by his people had a very short shelf life.

Midnight Bourbon, ridden by Paco Lopez, had the lead at the half, but Following Sea (Joel Rosario) took a brief advantage as the field turned for home. As that one began a quick retreat, Hot Rod Charlie and Mandaloun took over in mid-stretch, and that's when it got freaky. Hot Rod Charlie bore in and as he did, he pinched off Midnight Bourbon, who clipped heels with Mandaloun, causing Lopez to fall to the track, tumbling instinctively to avoid trailing horses. Hot Rod Charlie out-dueled Mandaloun to the wire, stopping the clock in 1:47.38.

This occurrence looked obvious to the stewards. They lit up the inquiry sign, and in a relatively short time, announced that Hot Rod Charlie was disqualified and placed last for his act of interference. That allowed Mandaloun to be declared the winner, and that three-year-old son of Into Mischief just may end up with the most mischievous championship season. In the Kentucky Derby, Mandaloun finished 2nd to

Medina Spirit, who subsequently was found to have a prohibited substance in his system, and it is very likely that Mandaloun will eventually be declared the winner of the Derby as well.

Mandaloun is trained by Brad Cox and owned by Juddmonte Stables, and he paid \$8.20 to win.

Jockey Lopez escaped the chaos with a bruised knee and sore ankle, and there was no significant harm to Midnight Bourbon.

The disqualification of Hot Rod Charlie created ripples of controversy. This was the first major Stakes race in the United States in which jockeys were prevented from using their whips (except for emergency situations). Hot Rod Charlie's jockey, Flavien Prat, believes he could have avoided the carnage if he'd had more discretion with his stick.

"Yes, the lack of a crop came into play," said Prat. "I was trying to correct him as much as I could. If I could have hit him just one time left-handed, we would have been just fine, but it is what it is."

Many jockeys feel that the New Jersey rule against the whip puts riders and horses in peril in the event a horse seems likely to veer out of its path. Animal rights people, of course, praise the ordinance, and other jurisdictions, including Woodbine, severely limit the number of times a

jockey is allowed to strike the horse.

And Mandaloun stands to make history as the only horse to win both the Kentucky Derby and the Haskell Stakes after finishing 2nd both times.

Charlie May Not in the Meadowlands Pace

Later that night, they ran the 45th \$700,000 Meadowlands Pace, and it was a wild one – so wild that the Canadian horse that finished second ended up being placed first. Track conditions might have been a factor – it was pouring rain during the \$700,000 race.

The 7-5 favourite, Perfect Sting (David Miller), had the lead coming into the stretch, and it was a 14-1 shot, with Charlie May (Brett Miller) gaining ground on the outside. Charlie May was able to squeak by late in the lane and hit the wire first by a neck, with Lawless Shadow (Mark MacDonald) getting up for second.

But the time of 1:48.3 had barely been posted when the stewards lit up the inquiry sign. At the top of the stretch, Charlie May had made a small bobble, but it caused him to bear to his right which forced the trailing Rocky Road Hanover (Dexter Dunn) to go off stride. Several minutes later, it was announced that Charlie May had been DQ'd and placed last, putting Lawless Shadow in the winner's circle.

"It was hard to tell because of the visibility," said MacDonald about the chaos that occurred around him with 3/8^{ths} of a mile to go. "I was watching my own horse, and I heard a commotion to the right of me and I looked, and Brett's horse was a little rough. My horse is a big aggressive horse, and I was just trying to stay between David's shoulders."

Lawless Shadow is trained by Dr. Ian Moore, who shares ownership with Serge Savard, Frank Cannon, and the RC McGroup Ltd. Lawless Shadow has now won half of his 16 races, bumping his earnings up to \$703,180. Those who bet him got \$12.40, a nice payoff on a horse that has hit the board 15 straight times.



Mark Macdonald hoists the Meadowlands Pace trophy

Filly's Terrifying Daily Double



Anyone owning a 2-year-old horse dreams of that animal setting a record, but Michael Ann Ewing didn't expect her filly, Bold and Bossy to hit an unprecedented mark for most frightening circumstances in the span of 24 hours.

On August 21, Bold and Bossy, a 2-year-old filly, was entered in the first race at Ellis Park, a racetrack in Henderson, Indiana. The race was at 5 ½ furlongs for

maidens with a claiming price of \$30,000. But before she could be loaded into the gate, Bold and Bossy got overly excited and tossed off her jockey, Miguel Mena. Somehow, she jumped a rail, ran over a barrier, got outside the racetrack, and started running down U.S. 41. For a brief time, she was running beside cars on Interstate 69, before exiting on the Veterans Memorial Parkway. While she was touring some of the great roadways of Indiana, Bold and Bossy was being pursued by trainers, police, and individuals from the sheriff's department.

"The racing community is so great," Ewing said. "The staff, trainers and assistants – people I didn't even know – jumped in their trucks or golf carts and there was a massive search for her as soon as she went running."

Because Bold and Bossy was equipped with blinkers, she was able to see only straight ahead and she continued her highway romp for about 30 minutes, at which point, exhaustion set in, and she stopped. Fortunately, there was a veterinarian among the pursuers and when the filly was apprehended, she was sedated and given fluids.

"Just by the grace of God, she was not hit," Ewing said. "A gentleman and his wife caught her. We checked her

out pretty good while we were there. Superficial cuts, a little bit of blood. But all in all, she was in great shape for what happened."

Bold and Bossy was not seriously hurt, though a back leg was bleeding from where she probably kicked herself. And in a bizarre plot twist, her frightening run on high speed highways was not the only scary experience she would have that day. Her owner, Ewing decided to put Bold and Bossy in the receiving barn where she could be treated with fluids before returning to the regular barn.

Incredibly, Ewing got a phone call at 5 am the next morning. The receiving barn had burned down. All 7 horses in the barn were rescued, but Bold and Bossy did suffer some minor burns.

"They're assessing her lungs and putting more fluids into her and they're going to evaluate the burns," said Ewing. "They'll just do everything they can for her for a couple of days, then we'll reassess and see what the game plan is."

The race that Bold and Bossy was supposed to run in would have been her first. Chances are, it will be a little while until she gets a second chance.

DOWN THE STRETCH PODCAST

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

Episode 78, July 19:

Canadian connections won a big race at the Meadowlands, but they needed a disqualification to get there. We have Stakes races from Woodbine and Mohawk and a stimulating lunch with jockey **Ademar Santos**. We feature **Justin Stein's** 4-win Thursday and **Gary Boulanger**, who won 4 races a week ago tells us how his new-born son **Christian** pulled him out of a dangerous funk. Women harness drivers were featured on the weekend at Hanover and Dresden raceways. **Keith McCalmont** assesses a huge Opening Day at Saratoga and just how dangerous was the jockey who has been suspended for the rest of the Woodbine thoroughbred meet?

Episode 79, July 26:

One continuing theme of this podcast is that horse racing is the only professional sport in which women compete with and regularly defeat the men, and we have ample proof this week. **Natasha Day** and **Maggie Jones** talk about the Womens' Driving Championship. **Chantal Sutherland** had a monster 4 win day at Gulfstream. Harness owner **Sydney Weaver** expresses the joy of winning with a horse she bred. Fillies raced in two OSS Golds at Mohawk. Thoroughbred ladies competed in the \$175,000 Nassau Stakes at Woodbine and the winning mare was trained by **Josie Carroll**. And how does jockey **Emma-Jayne Wilson** win the final race so often?

Episode 80, August 2:

With less than 3 weeks until the Queen's Plate, how come only 4 horses ran in the Plate Trial? **Weyburn**, the best Canadian-bred 3 year-old skipped the Trial to take on bigger fish in the Jim Dandy at Saratoga. The Woodbine Oaks produced a brilliant 3 year-old filly. Two year-olds trotted for big money at Mohawk. Ever seen a dead-heat between a father and daughter in a trot? That happened to **Roy and Kacey Burns** in Ohio. How about **Robert Tisbert**, an 84 year-old driver, steering his harness horse to the winners circle. Twenty speedballs erupted from the gates in two trials for the Ontario Derby at Ajax Downs and we have the 10 finalists. What do **Elizabeth Taylor** and this podcast have in common? Well, we have multiple **Husbands - Patrick and Christopher**. Our buddy and contributor **Garnet Barnsdale** owns a piece of a horse that won at Mohawk and Garnet got just a tad excited.

Episode 81, August 9:

We put a lot of miles on the podcast with Stakes races at Mohawk and Woodbine, **Mighty Heart** running in West Virginia, an historic mark for **Steve Asmussen** at Saratoga. The Whitney Stakes, Industry Day at Grand Ravine and where will Chiefswood Stables' **Weyburn** be on Queen's Plate day? **Eurico Rosa da Silva**, **James MacDonald**, **Emma-Jayne Wilson**, **Ake Svanstedt**, **Tom Patton**, **Antonio Gallardo** and **Shaun Bridgmohan** brighten up this podcast and we update the speedballs at Ajax Downs.

Episode 82, August 16:

Canadian recording star **Jim Cuddy** headlines a star-studded cast in this podcast. Cuddy talks about performing at the Queen's Plate and which of his songs may have horse racing themes. **Mark Casse** tells us about being inducted into the National Horse Racing Hall of Fame in Saratoga and about a childhood experience that changed the arc of his life. We gave Woodbine's **Jason Portuondo** a budget of three words per horse to evaluate the entire potential field for next Sunday's Queen's Plate. **Jennifer Morrison** reveals fast times at Ajax High, trainer **Daryl Ezra** explains how he claimed a horse that finished 10th and turned it into a runaway winner, and just for some shadenfreude, we've got what we consider to be the worst horse race ever!

Episode 83, August 23:

For the 1st time in 2 years, racing fans were allowed into Woodbine to watch the **Queen's Plate**, all of them conducting themselves safely as they watched **Safe Conduct** and **Irad Ortiz** win the 162nd edition of the Plate. By a stroke of outrageous coincidence, Safe Conduct was actually the 2nd horse with that name to win a Stakes race last week. The other was a 2 year-old trotter at Mohawk. **The Gold Cup and Saucer** is the biggest harness race on Prince Edward Island and we treat you to the exhilarating **Vance Cameron** race call. This podcast is jammed with Stakes races from Woodbine, Mohawk and Ajax Downs and we probe the human side of versatile jockey, **Ismael Mosqueira**. And hang into to the end to hear the heroic act of a jockey who, in mid-race, abandoned any chance of winning to save another rider from certain disaster.

Women Drivers

The Women's Driving Championship, conducted over 2 days and 10 races at Hanover and Dresden Raceways on July 17-18, certainly raised the uncomfortable question about harness racing in Ontario.



Nicholas Barnsdale Photo
Maggie Jones takes the OWDC opener and her first win of the season aboard Face Of War

Which is – why is there not one single female impact driver at Mohawk?

Woodbine and many major thoroughbred tracks throughout the world have many tough talented women who regularly outride the men, but the standardbred side does not appear to have embraced the argument that a woman can properly steer a harness horse.

For those still embedded in the dark ages about women in a male dominated sport, the 10 races of the Women's Driving Championship were definitely persuasive that gender should not be an issue when the starting gate picks up speed.

The 8 competitors in the contest (with their career wins) were Andrea Leon (190), Natasha Day (202), Julie Walker (5), Marie-Claude Auger (474), Marielle Enberg (9), Pam Forgie (3), Maggie Jones (6) and Brittany Kennedy (5). All the purse winnings went to two charities: Harness the Hope for Breast Cancer and the Canadian Cancer Society for Cervical Cancer, and points were awarded on an 8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 basis.



Jones is all smiles in the winner's circle

Nicholas Barnsdale Photo

On the first day at Hanover, Marielle Enberg took early control. After Maggie Jones won the first heat with Face Of War (\$6), Enberg prevailed in the next two races, scoring with Premier Kane (\$8.80) and E.L. Lonely Charlie (\$12.10). The 4th race went to Julie Walker

and Runaway Heiress (\$7.90) and the 5th was won by Natasha Day who roared through the stretch with Easy Flyer (\$9.70).

The second half of the competition took place at Dresden Raceway. Julie Walker put a second win on

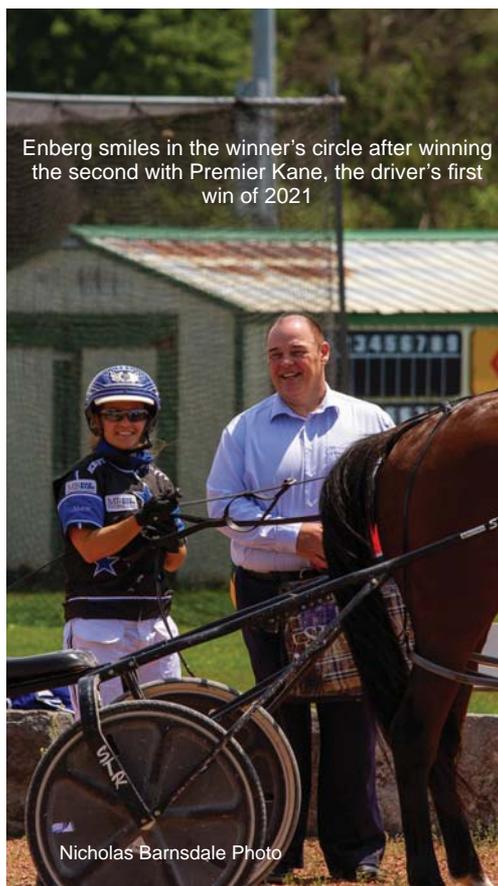


Nicholas Barnsdale Photo

Natasha Day (inside) and Marielle Enberg (outside) battle for the lead in the second race

her card when she brought home Tilly Dreamcatcher (\$15.20) in the first, and Marie-Claude Auger got on the board in the 2nd with Miss Read (\$3.70). Natasha Day delivered Dreaming Out Loud (\$3.00) in the 3rd and Day completed her comeback by winning the 4th behind April Bandit (\$3.50). The final race of the event went to Mister X (\$4.60) driven by Andrea Leon.

With 58 points, Day finished 1st, 5 points better than Marie-Claude Auger, followed by Julie Walker (50), Marielle Enberg (46), Pam Forgie (46), Britt Kennedy



Enberg smiles in the winner's circle after winning the second with Premier Kane, the driver's first win of 2021

Nicholas Barnsdale Photo

(37), Maggie Jones (36) and Andrea Leon (34).

Coming into the competition, Marie-Claude Auger and Natasha Day were the two most experienced drivers. Auger, a regular at Rideau Carlton and the Hippodrome in Trois Rivieres, had 3,800 drives and 474 wins. Day, who arrived from Australia 6 years ago, had won 202 races from 2,474 assignments, most of those at the "B" tracks in Ontario.

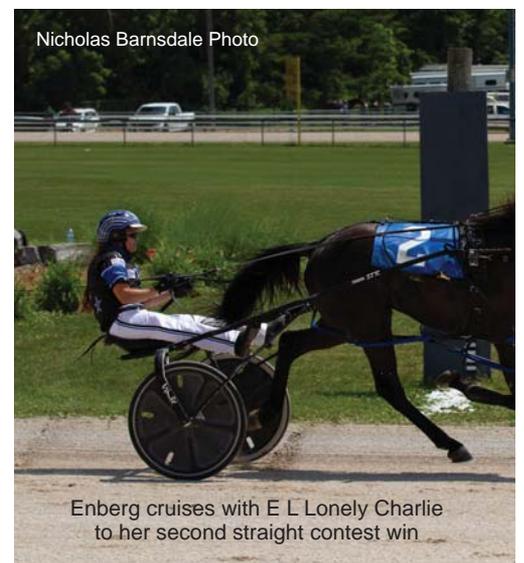
"It was driving like the old school days," says Day about the 10 races with only female drivers. "There were no holes given. It was a no friends allowed kind of thing. It made for some good, tough racing."

From the start, Day would have been one of the favourites to win, but that was not necessarily her top priority.

"I was kind of hoping that maybe one of the other girls would win it," she admits. "It would have given them a lift. I'm not saying that I wasn't trying. I just wanted to get around, get myself some points and if we won, we won. If we didn't, well then congrats to whoever else did."

Of the 8 women battling it out at Hanover and Dresden, Day is the only one who makes the occasional drive at Mohawk. She concedes her numbers aren't terrific there.

"My biggest problem is the stock that I get is generally not the best quality," she says. "So I go out on the 15 and 20-1 shots and that's pretty much where they finish, accordingly. The other drivers don't intimidate me, but it



Nicholas Barnsdale Photo

Enberg cruises with E L Lonely Charlie to her second straight contest win

would be nice to go out there with a little bit of power and be able to prove that I'm up there with those guys."

Considering the two cancer charities that the women raised funds for, the presence of Maggie Jones made the event even more compelling.

"In June I was diagnosed with a clinical stage 1 breast cancer," says Jones. "They mentioned having surgery the week before the Driving Championship."

Both Jones and her husband, Keith, a long-time trainer/driver, felt that Maggie should be in the Championship, and they discussed putting off the surgery for a few days.

"My surgeon was very supportive of this," she says. "And I was able to delay it until 4 days after the event."

"That was so great that she could hold off her treatment



the OWDC field banks into the first turn in the fourth race

Nicholas Barnsdale Photo

– why is there not a single lady harness driver making an impact at Mohawk?

“Plain and simple – owners and trainers just don’t think they can do it,” says Day. “They don’t want them there. They don’t think they’re good.”

“I think we have the ability,” says Jones. “We just don’t necessarily have the same opportunities and I don’t know why that is. I’ve been lucky that I come from a family that supports my ambitions. My dad was the first one that said, ‘There’s no reason you can’t go drive against the boys.’”

“It’s just an old boy’s club,” adds Day. “In Australia, women drive in top-level races: Breeders Crowns, Darbys – similar to the North American Cup. There’s multiple women driving in the biggest races.”

In Australia, Kerryn Manning has amassed close to 4,000 wins from over 17,000 drives, and Kate Gath is also a force with 7,660 drives for nearly 1,900 wins. Those numbers compare to similar figures compiled by Doug McNair or James MacDonald.

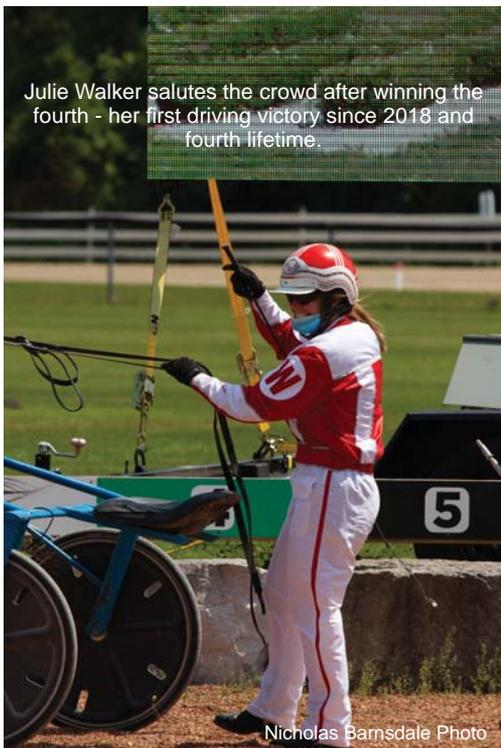
The success of the Women’s Driving Championship

to race,” says Day. “That was really why we were doing it. We were doing it for her. So we wish her all the best with that and hope she comes out of it with flying colours.”

If enjoying life and having a positive attitude is an important part of therapy, Jones’ weekend gives her a great post position for her toughest race.

“I was just beyond thrilled when Hanover’s Steve Fitzsimmons approached me and asked me to be part of it,” she says. “It was such an honour to be included with those other great female drivers. I was really touched to be involved with such a strong group.”

Jones’ driving resume doesn’t eat up much on the Standardbred Canada site. Even adding in the 10 drives from the WDC, she shows just 96 drives and 6 wins. So driving in 10 races over 2 days took her into uncharted territory.



Julie Walker salutes the crowd after winning the fourth - her first driving victory since 2018 and fourth lifetime.

Nicholas Barnsdale Photo



Local favourite Natasha Day scores her first of the championship in the final Hanover race

Nicholas Barnsdale Photo

“It was a completely new experience,” she says with a little laugh. “It made us feel like real drivers. I would have to say, I have new respect for the men, just because it was so busy, having to remember not just post position and the horses’ strengths, but who is the favourite and what we should be doing. It was also a learning opportunity, just to drive that many horses over 2 days. When I came home and reflected on it, I learned more in two days than I have learned in a couple of years of just driving my own horses.”

Not that any of us needed to see these 10 races to understand that a woman is just as capable as a man behind a harness horse, but the question had to be asked

just may prompt Woodbine to conduct a competition between women drivers and the men. It’s a great idea and fans would love it. Natasha Day suggests the men might be in for a little surprise.

“They definitely would be shocked about how tight we race, and the no holds given and the no friendship rule,” declares Day, throwing down the gauntlet. “They would be taken aback by that.”

One last question: is there any good reason why a woman isn’t good enough to drive a harness horse in an important race?

“I’d like to know the answer to that,” says Day.

“There’s no reason,” says Jones.



Fiesty Icon back on top

By Jennifer Morrison



Albert, was quickly in an early battle under jockey Tony Phillips with Picov Maturity winner Firing Red Jess in the 330-yard dash and held that rival safe to the finish. His time of 16.733 was good for a 101 speed index, marking the return to top form for the multiple Stakes winner.

Firing Red Jess, favoured at 8 to 5 for owner George Coleman of Peterborough, was half length clear for second under Josh Scott while the lone mare in the field, Night Fishn, finished third.

Sent off at 6 to 1 odds for the Maturity, Feisty Icon began



his 2021 campaign with had a 7th in his season debut and then was 5th behind Firing Red Jess in the Picov Maturity. Following almost five weeks of freshening at Kennedy's farm, Fiesty Icon was razor-sharp in the comeback. He paid \$14.30 for the win.

"He broke so hard today he actually stumbled a little bit," said Phillips, who won three races on the day. "He recovered rapidly and he just started running them down and the more he went on, the better he got."

Kennedy, who bought Fiesty Icon as a yearling from breeder Picov Cattle Company, has sent out Fiesty Icon, by Ontario sire Sugarman Perry, to 21 career wins from 52 starts with over \$382,000 in earnings.

"He still loves to race and he wants to race," said Kennedy. "I am blessed to have him."

Kennedy and Phillips also combined to win with Hanover Hill Chalsee for the Picov Cattle Company in a speed index race.

Jockey Cory Spataro also won three races on the afternoon, two for trainer Craig Spada, to take the lead in the competitive jockey's race with 14 victories. That's one more than Ismael Mosqueira, who was blanked on the afternoon.

On August 18, reigning Ajax Downs Horse of the Year Fiesty Icon scored his first win of 2021 in emphatic fashion, charging to victory by a neck in the \$42,120 Ontario Sires Stakes Maturity. The classy nine year-old, owned and trained by Rick Kennedy of Mount

Jess A Sweet Suprize Went Very Fast!

By Jennifer Morrison



There is a new star at Ajax Downs and her name is Jess A Sweet Suprize, a diminutive but ultra-fast 5-year-old Quarter Horse mare who crushed a top field in the \$19,890 QROOI Sprint Series (2) on July 21. The feisty bay gal, who was coming off a win in the 110-yard first leg of the Sprint series on June 16

with a 94-speed index, sped to a three-quarter length win in the 220-yard second in a track-record 11.747 for a whopping 108 speed index.

Ridden by Cory Spataro of Innisfil for owner and trainer Craig Spada of Ridgeway, Jess a Sweet Suprize was always in command and held off Milena Kwiciecien's Carneros, who held the former track record of 11.780, for the victory – the sixth of her career. Night Fishn, another mare, finished third for Mary Schrama of Peterborough. Three-time Horse of the Year Country Boy 123, the race favourite, lunged up in the air at the start of the race and finished ninth.

Jess a Sweet Surprize, the 3-1 second choice, paid \$9.20 to win.

"She's a fire-breathing dragon on post parade," said

Spataro. "She was out there bucking and kicking. In the starting gate, she was so focused, I was just waiting for them to hit the button and open the gates because I knew she would be out of there fast."

Jess a Sweet Surprize is the only foal of her late dam Jess Curl My Prize, and was bred in Iowa by Erin Chrisman and Pattie Marshall.

"She's so happy and in the best form of her life," said Spada, who was registering his ninth win of the season, just behind leader Jason Pascoe who has 11.

Spataro also won on 2019 Horse of the Year, Had to Be Ivory on Wednesday in an allowance/optional race, and leads all Ajax jockeys with nine victories.

The third leg of the Sprint Series is scheduled for September 8.



REGISTER TO ATTEND LIVE RACING
 Watch Wager & WIN
AT
AJAX DOWNS RACETRACK
 No entry without pre-registration
 Limited space available - Register 48 hours before race days
 at www.ajaxdowns.com

WEDNESDAY LIVE RACING UNTIL NOVEMBER 3RD
 Summer Wednesdays starting at 1:30pm
 Fall Wednesdays starting at 12:55pm - Starting Sept 15th
www.HPIBET.com or ajaxdowns.com/live-streaming

Follow Us On: www.ajaxdowns.com



Frank Hunt, now 74, has been in the horse racing game for a long time. These days, he owns three horses at Woodbine and three at Fort Erie. Back in the 80s, he had his trainer's licence, which was pretty convenient for a guy who grew up at Queen and Logan, just a couple miles from Greenwood. He's got a weird story about how he came to own his first horse.

"I was in the heating and air conditioning business, and a gentleman had a horse that he couldn't get to the races," says Hunt. "It kept on coming up sore. So, jokingly, he said, 'I'm going to sell this one for meat.' And I said, 'Don't do that. I'll buy it off you. How much do you want for it?' He said, 'Anything you got in your left pocket I'll take as payment for the horse.' I reached in my pocket, and I pulled out \$2 and he said, 'I'll take that.' So I bought the horse for \$2. Her name was Evidently Giddy, and I gave her to a horse trainer called Deo Brown, and about a month later we won our first. I kept her as a broodmare, and she got me into the breeding end of it."

According to Equibase, Evidently Giddy broke her maiden second time out at Greenwood and won a couple of claiming races at Fort Erie in 1984. She ended up with 3 wins from 18 starts and \$9,079 in earnings.

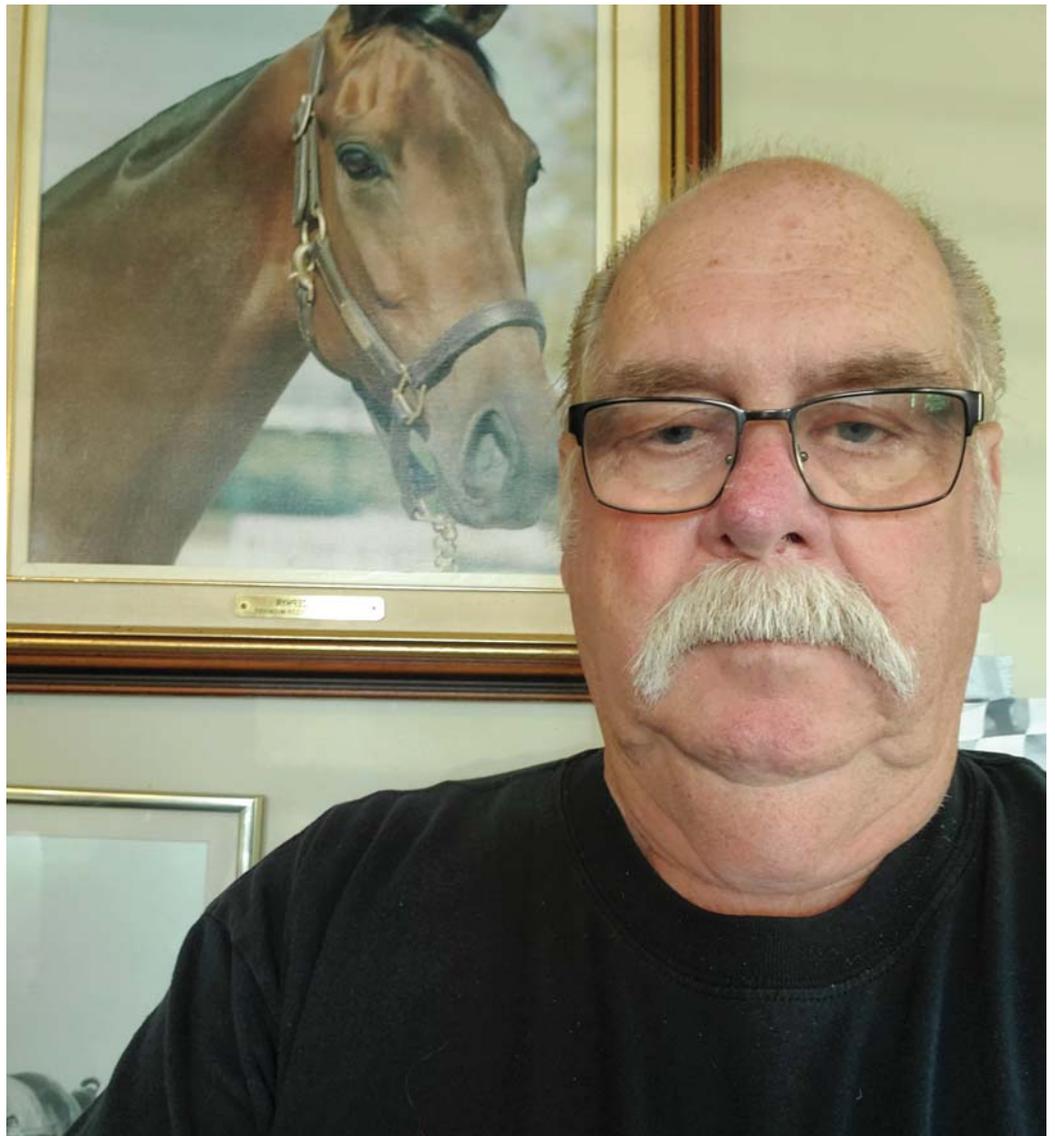
The best horse that Hunt ever owned was Steady Zephyr.

"We claimed the horse off Kinghaven for \$10,000," says Hunt. "The horse had chips in his knee – 14 chips actually. We took the horse for orthoscopic surgery, back when that kind of procedure was just starting to happen in the equine business. We took him home to our farm and rehabilitated him. We felt we had a good \$10,000 horse."

As Steady Zephyr recovered from his surgery, Hunt made a very pleasant discovery.

"Kinghaven had made Steady Zephyr eligible for the Queen's Plate," he says. "So I said, 'I'm going to start training this horse for the Queen's Plate.' I found out he was a much better horse than we first thought. I hired a trainer named Ray O'Connor. He said, 'What are you going to do with the horse?' And I said, 'I'm going to run him in the Queen's Plate.' And he said, 'Not with those knees.' I said, 'Ray, trust me, this horse will make it to the Queen's Plate.' We entered him in a couple of allowance races, and he ran really good. He ran in the Plate Trial, and he finished 4th, coming from dead last with Jack Lauzon on him and Lauzon said, 'I could have won this race if I'd moved a little quicker.'"

That was all Frank Hunt needed to hear. Steady Zephyr



was headed to the 1987 Queen's Plate.

That was the year Kinghaven's Market Control, ridden by Ken Skinner won the Plate at odds of 9-1. Steady Zephyr, under Robin Platts, did give Hunt a thrill.

"We were 4th coming into the stretch and we were cut off," recalls Hunt. "We finished 6th in the Queen's Plate. Not too many people new in the business (like I was) would run a \$10,000 claimer in the Queen's Plate."

Steady Zephyr did his best work after the Queen's Plate. He ended his 3-year-old season with a pair of allowance races, then won 5 times as a 4-year-old, including the Fair Play Stakes and Durham Handicap at Woodbine, and the Buckeye Stakes at Thistletown. Steady Zephyr finished his career with 11 wins from 34 starts and \$279,983 in the bank.

The politics of the backstretch made it difficult back then for Hunt to sustain his racing interests.

"You couldn't get stalls unless you were a big shot," he says. "They treated you really badly. I went in for my trainer's license and they said you can't get your license unless you work on the track for 3 to 5 years under a trainer."

A divorce from his first wife didn't help matters. Hunt had to sell his farm that included a training centre.

"I liquidated all my assets and took 20 horses Down to Louisiana," he says. "They gave me all the stalls I wanted. I was down there for about 8 or 9 years."

Hunt also took horses to Lone Star and Retama Park in Texas, with occasional trips to Ohio, but he has returned

with a modest stable to run at Woodbine and Fort Erie. He has been married to Karina Shaak for 22 years and the horses are in her name.

On July 24, Shangassah, a 4-year-old gelding, ran a pretty nice race. Under Daisuke Fukomoto, Shangassah finished 2nd, just 3/4 of a length behind the winner. It was a \$40,000 claim race at 6 1/2 furlongs, the odds were 11-1, and 2nd place was worth \$8,500. Shangassah has just 2 wins from 16 races, but the July 24 heat was the 8th straight time he had earned a cheque.

Hardy Candy, a 6-year-old gelding owned by Hunt and his wife, is still looking for his 3rd win after 32 tries. He was 5th of 6 in a \$5,000 claimer at Woodbine on July 30.

Pastel Emily, a 4-year-old filly won at Fort Erie on June 28 and since then has recorded a 7th, a 5th and a 4th.

Hunt and Shaak also own Someone Else, a 4-year-old filly who won a couple races out west for trainer Tim Rycroft. Trainer Alison Crook claimed Someone Else for Shaak for \$10,000 at Woodbine last November. Since then, Someone Else has been seeing someone else ahead of her – she has finished 6th, 3rd and 4th in subsequent races.

Racing thoroughbreds for Frank Hunt seems to be a mixed blessing.

"I love the game. I love the horses. I love the sport," he says. "But the sport is dying here in Canada. We're not promoting the business as much anymore. And all the good old guys are going. They're all passing on and leaving the business."



It was July 22 at Mohawk, and a \$15,000 maiden pace. The 2-year-old Hes Stalking You went off at just over 5-2, even though the inexperienced colt had broken stride three times in a row, including a qualifier and his first two pari-mutuel races. This time, driver Jody Jamieson took him right to the top from post 7, and the horse behaved all the way around to win by 3 comfortable lengths in 1:54.2.

The trainer is Dave Menary. The owners are Menary Guerriero, Bruce Norris, J Paul Henderson, and Sydney Weaver. The latter, a 21-year-old woman, was doubly thrilled with the win because Hes Stalking You was bred by Weaver from her mare, Sydney Seelster. We don't know how Guerriero, Norris and Henderson were behaving as they watched the race, but Weaver might have been a tad excited.

"I was calling him and hollering and screaming," she says. "I can get very loud and energetic. I am very glad and proud that I have a horse on the racetrack."

Experiencing your horse win a race is always special, but Weaver's emotions pushed the envelope this time, because of the process she started when she bred Sydney Seelster to a stallion named Hes Watching.

"It is something that is hard to put into words because it's such a powerful and special moment," she says. "It's surreal. It's something I will never forget."

Weaver was just 12 years old when she became the owner of Sydney Seelster. That the young lady and her filly both had the same first name was a serendipitous coincidence.

"When I got her, she was already racing and she was already named," she says. "So it kind of just was meant to be. She had 13 wins for me personally."

Sydney Seelster was claimed on December 23, 2012, for \$6,000 at Flamboro. It was a Christmas gift for Weaver who had already developed a devotion for harness racing. She nicknamed her filly 'Pinky'.

"She raced at Flamboro, Grand River and a few times at London and Clinton," says Weaver. "After her 2015 season, I made the decision to make her a broodmare."

Sydney Seelster produced 3 offspring, the last of which is Hes Stalking You, and after that birth, Weaver made an unusual decision.

"I brought her back recently for a few races," she says. "Pinky was telling me she wanted to compete."

The return to the track for Sydney Seelster was not very productive – she failed to hit the board in 7 tries. Not to worry. Pinky is doing fine.



Sydney in the bike with Dave Menary

"She's just loving her retirement," assures Weaver.

When Sydney Seelster's 3rd baby arrived, there was the issue of naming the newborn.

"This colt is so powerful, and he has a presence," says Weaver. "I wanted a name that would make people notice. My mom and I were having dinner and I said to Mom, 'It'll be cool when he's sitting second in the pocket, and he'll be stalking the leader.' Then I paused and I said, 'That's the perfect name – Hes Stalking You.'"

From that alone, you could easily figure out that Sydney Weaver is bright and creative. She's actually quite the multi-tasker. She's about to enter her 4th year at Carleton University where she is doing a combined honours degree in communications and media studies and human rights and social justice, with a minor in professional writing.

As a 12-year-old, Weaver was named Standardbred Canada's Fan Club Ambassador. She is also a regular contributor to the online site Harnesslink.com.

And there's some lovely family symmetry at work here. Sydney's dad, Don, has trained horses going back as far as the early 1990s. It was more of a hobby than a job, and when Sydney was born, he realized he needed the type of work necessary to raise a family. That explains why Standardbred Canada shows no training lines for Don Weaver from 1996 to 2013. But then Sydney Seelster became part of the family.

"I brought him back into it when I got Pinky," says Sydney. "And we have had him back ever since."

There is a bit of a small elephant in the room here. This story is meant to be about a young woman whose love of the sport seems inexhaustible, who chases success in everything she does. So how necessary is it to point out that Sydney has cerebral palsy and is confined to a wheelchair?

"I don't have a preference either way," she says. "Maybe it helps the story by adding another layer. It's up to you. We're all challenged in some way,"

(I think Sydney has seen my betting figures).

Sydney Weaver seems very much to live in the moment, so when she is asked to recall her most thrilling moments in harness racing, she's inclined to mention the last time her horse won.

"All of the moments over the years have been because of the wonderful people I have been involved with," she says. "Going to the Meadowlands was a thrill as was going to the heart of racing at the Hall of Fame in Goshen, New York. Being an owner with Pinky and with Hes Stalking You with the amazing owners that I have the blessing of being partners with has been great."

Are there specific races that stand out for her?

"Either when Up The Credit won the North America Cup, or when Captaintreacherous won the North America Cup," she says, somewhat unwilling to whittle down. "Or any of Pinky's races or last night. Those are my top ones."

There's something incredibly grounded about Sydney Weaver. She always wants to give credit to everyone around her.

"Whenever I am having a bad day, I think about those people who go to the barn and give it their all and that makes me more passionate," she says warmly. "My trainer Dave Menary is a perfect example of someone who is dedicated to the sport. I am proud to have him as my trainer. This whole experience with Hes Stalking You would not be possible without Dave Menary and the other owners of the horse. I am blessed and fortunate to have them and be a part of this journey together."

One of the biggest challenges that horse racing has at this stage in the 3rd millennium is attracting a younger crowd to the races. The industry needs to bottle up the essence of Sydney Weaver and fill the stands with it.

Sydney's mother, Lisa, has the perfect line about her dynamic daughter.

"God put Sydney in a wheelchair so we would all be able to keep up with her."

Quarter Horse
Owner of the
Month:
Scott
Reid



On August 4 at Ajax Downs, Night Leader, ridden by Josh Scott surprised in the \$60,020 Ontario Bred Futurity at 300 yards. Night Leader paid \$19.60 for the win, and for 33-year-old Scott Reid, who has been training since he was a teenager, this was a high point in his career. Reid shares ownership of the two-year-old bay gelding with John Wilson.

“We bought him from Tyler Slater,” says Reid about Night Leader. “The whole Slater family has been in racing for as long as I can remember. We paid \$6,500, somewhere around there.”

As much as the \$25,163 first place cheque from the Futurity would seem to indicate a nice profit on Night Leader, Reid amends that thought.

“Not really,” he says. “By the time you get him broken and with training, we’re probably around breaking even with that horse.”

Reid, like so many others in horse racing, inherited his love for the sport from his father. Don Reid has been training quarter horses since the 1980s. From 2010 to 2017, he campaigned the sensational One Kool Wave, who won 25 of his 43 starts and earned \$388,638.

Reid (the younger) began his training and horse owning adventures sometime in 2008. His first horse was a filly called I Cry Too.

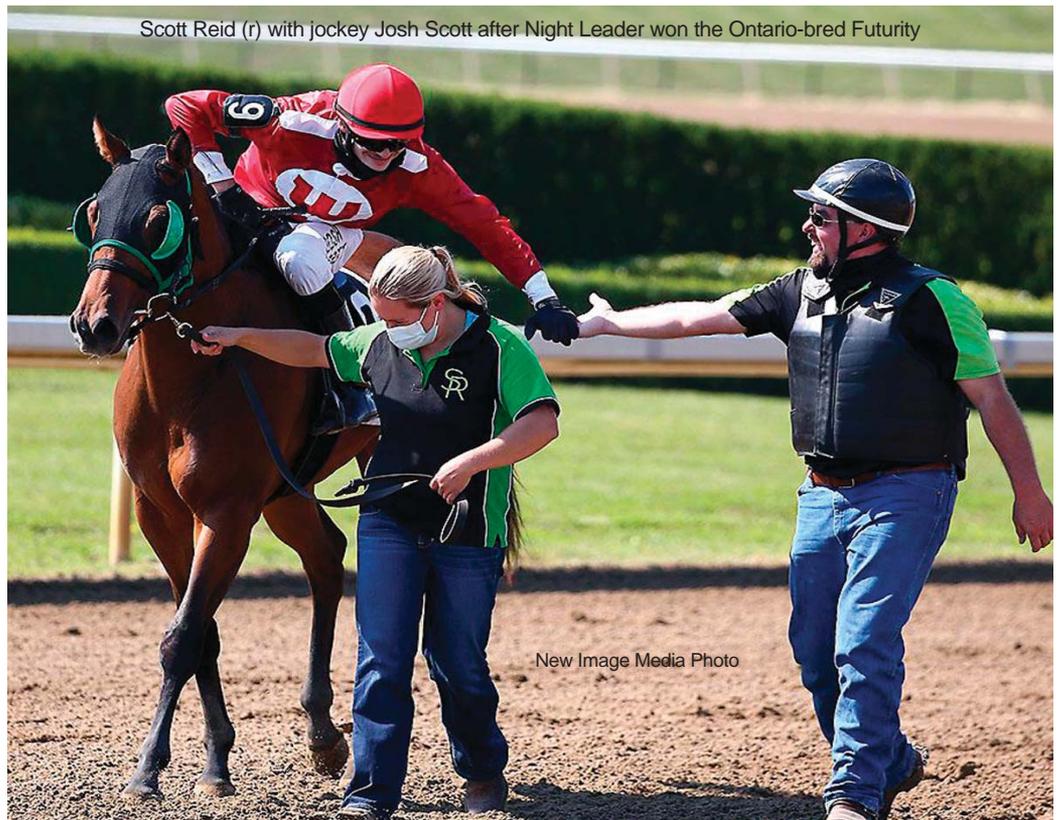
“I only had her for the last year of her career,” he says. “We bought her in Oklahoma and brought her up here and my dad trained her for the first few starts. Then I got my trainer’s license and I trained her for her last three starts.

I Cry Too ran for a purse of \$8,455 in August of 2008 and as Scott Reid’s first trainee, she produced a 3rd place finish. Thirteen days later, with Kim Ito riding, I Cry Too romped at 300 yards, winning by 1 ½ lengths. The purse was \$10,650. Two weeks and a day later, the filly won again, this time for \$8,500 and with Ramon Dominguez aboard.

Reid has fond memories of a horse called Squincheyes (his sire was Mr Eye Opener). Reid bought her as a 2-year

“She was just a great racehorse,” he says. “I believe that in all the times I started her, she never missed a check.”

That comment needs a little illustrating. On August 9, 2009, Squincheyes finished 10th in the



Scott Reid (r) with jockey Josh Scott after Night Leader won the Ontario-bred Futurity

New Image Media Photo

Princess Derby, but in fact earned \$622 just for making it that far. In the 21 other races she ran for Reid, she won four, finished 2nd six times, 3rd four times, 4th four times and 5th three times. Squincheyes earned \$49,239 in her career and has become more valuable since her retirement.

“Now she’s the main staple of the broodmares that I have at the farm here,” adds Reid. “I have two of her offspring that have each done well – Albertt and Elenorr.”

There’s an explanation for the double consonants at the end of each horse’s name.

“If there’s other horses in the past that had that name, you can’t use it,” says Reid. “But if you put an extra ‘t’ or ‘r’ at the end, then you’re ok.”

(There actually was a quarter horse named Albert who was born in 1929, and mare named Eleanor won a quarter horse race at Los Alamito

Albertt is now an 8-year-old and he’s won 8 times, hit the board 22 times, and earned \$110,895. Elenorr, now a 6-year-old mare, has won 7 of 30 races, has been in the money 18 times and has earnings of \$88,913.

These days, Reid has a share in 5 different horses and is the sole owner of Tempting First Dash.

“We bought her in Oklahoma at the Heritage Place sale,” he says. “We paid \$15,000. She won her first 3 starts last year. She did well the first portion of the year and then kind of tailed off at the end of the year.”

Reid also trains horses that he shares with other people.

“I have horses with John Wilson and two horses in partnership with Colleen McCracken,” he says. “And then I own a piece of Raven Racing Syndicate. All of the clients that I have on the farm got together and bought a single horse.”

That single horse is Jess Raven, purchased for \$20,000.

“She’s done pretty well,” says Reid. “Last year was her first year, and she did quite well.”

Jess Raven is now a 3-year-old, and in each of her first 5 races she was able to contribute to the original investment. In 2020 she was 3rd in her debut, then won at 300 yards, earning a cheque worth \$6,440. Her 3rd race in 2020 was a sharp 2nd in the \$64,700 Ontario Sires Stakes Futurity and for that Raven Racing cashed \$13,340. This year, Jess Raven has run twice, coming in 4th each time.

You could ask any horse trainer what the “secret” to producing a winning animal is and get a different response each time. Nonetheless, we posed that question to Reid.

“I guess that would be kind of up to everybody’s own interpretation,” he says. “But as far as I see it, it’s more about keeping the horse happy and sound than it is about having them super fit. Fitness goes a long way, but happy and sound is more.”

It was jockey Josh Scott who rode Night Leader to the unexpected win in the Ontario Bred Futurity. That was just 1 of 2 wins that Scott has produced during the Ajax Downs meet so far, but Reid thinks he’s the right fit for his horses.

“Josh has been riding first call for me this year. So he had his pick of which ones he wanted in that race,” says Reid

In fact, three of Reid’s horses were in that Stakes race and obviously, Scott made the right choice. Rapter, ridden by Cassandra Jeschke, finished 6th and Shifting Tides with Ramiro Castillo was 7th. There would have been four Scott Reid horses in the race, but the 2-year-old filly, Oh My Gawd, was a steward’s scratch.

So what is it about quarter horse racing that gets Scott up before the sun rises?

“It’s just so fast,” he says. “There’s nothing else like it. The pure speed right from the start.”

THE **EASIEST** WAY TO GET IN THE RACE



FREE \$30*

USE PROMO CODE

GET30



DOWNLOAD THE APP TODAY

DarkHorseBets.com

*Visit DarkHorseBets.com for terms and conditions. Know When To Take The Reins.ResponsibleGambling.org

Dark Horse – The Sequel



Coinciding with the 162nd running of the Queen’s Plate, Woodbine Entertainment revealed a revamped and simplified wagering concept with the introduction of the innovative Dark Horse Bets app.

Dark Horse Bets App is the easiest horse betting mobile application for new fans looking to experience the rush of horse racing. Using a new and intuitive app design to help new users make their first bet, Dark Horse Bets App also

provides in-app coaching and new AI-powered stats that help you get up to speed and make picks with confidence.

“Horse racing is positioned well for today’s younger generation as it’s the original ‘social sport’ with fast-paced, two minutes of action in spurts,” says Jim Lawson, CEO, Woodbine Entertainment. “However, the wagering experience for new fans hasn’t been simplified through innovation well enough – until now.”

Lawson recognizes that, although long-time fans may enjoy the many minute details of a racing form, the new generation of racing fans will gravitate to something more user friendly.

“Dark Horse Bets was developed with today’s sports bettor in mind,” says Lawson. “It has a very intuitive mobile first experience that gives new fans the confidence to get started wagering on horse racing. It is perfectly suited for the multi-screen generation and lifestyle with its simplicity and the thrill of racing in the palm of your hand.”

The first version of Dark Horse was launched in 2020

and used as an opportunity to collect real time data and user feedback. Leveraging the insights from that period, Woodbine Entertainment has spent the last several months modifying the app to reflect what customers want.

“Listening to feedback and analyzing data over the past year has been a big part of our strategy to deliver an app that will resonate with customers and make it easy and fun for them to use,” says Lawson.

The app can be downloaded for Apple or Android devices at DarkHorseBets.com. Dark Horse Bets is also available in the Apple App Store.

Users can play for fun with virtual coins or turn up the thrills and join the real action by playing with real money. The heart-pounding action can be experienced immediately through a user’s mobile device with live streaming of the races.

For a limited time, as part of the Dark Horse Bets App re-launch, new users will receive a free \$30 cash deposit when signing up for an account.

Chantal’s Monster Day at Gulfstream

Since the beginning of April, Chantal Sutherland, 45, has been riding at Gulfstream. She’s been averaging a win or two a week, not dominating, but definitely showing she’s still a top-level rider.

On Saturday, July 24, however, Sutherland erupted for an amazing day at the Hallandale Beach, Florida track, winning



A perfect ride was the key for Key Biscayne

on 4 of her 6 assignments.

Not to be too sophomoric, but Sutherland’s wonderful afternoon began with the appropriately named Hot Babe, a 3-year-old filly. In the 3rd race, Sutherland had Hot Babe close to the front early, surged to the lead around the far turn and pulled away to win the one-mile dirt race by over 11 lengths. Hot Babe won for the 2nd straight time under Sutherland and paid \$5.20.

Through races 8-10, Sutherland created her own very worthwhile Pick-3. She captured the 8th aboard the 4-year-old gelding, Hard Ten. Sixth at the half in this one-mile dirt race, Hard Ten revved it up with a 5-wide move into the



Hard Ten was an easy winner for Sutherland

Adam Coglianese Photo

stretch and smoked his rivals by 3 ½ lengths. This was not much of a surprise – Hot Ten paid just \$2.80.

It was a different scenario in race 9, a Maiden Special Weight, at 6 furlongs with a purse of \$70,000. Sutherland’s horse, Clapton, went off at 9-1, but was a presence early, galloped to the front at the top of the stretch and persevered by half a length, breaking his maiden on just his second try. He paid \$20.20.

The 10th race was the \$75,000 Monroe Stakes with 7 fillies and mares asked to go a mile on the dirt, and Sutherland was paired with Key Biscayne, a 6-1 shot. Back pretty far early, Key Biscayne came wide into the stretch, but was moving powerfully, gobbling up her rivals one by one and finding the wire first by a neck in the nice time of 1:36.90.

Clapton paid \$14.40 to win and the all-Sutherland Pick-3 was worth \$101.30 for a \$1 bet.

In case you’re wondering, jockeys get 10% of the winner’s

purse, so Sutherland’s earnings on this day exceeded \$11,700.

“I’m so grateful. I’m grateful to God, and I’m grateful to Gulfstream for being so amazing,” said Sutherland, who is very popular at Gulfstream. “It’s been really nice here. I’m so happy it’s worked out the way it did. Thanks to trainer Kenny



Hot Babe wins

Adam Coglianese Photo

McPeck, who helped me get fit to do this during the winter.”

We should have talked with Sutherland before the Monroe Stakes because she expected a winning effort from Key Biscayne.

“I had worked her, and I loved how she worked,” said Sutherland. “I had so much confidence going into the race. I just love the way she handles everything.”

As for the last time Chantal Sutherland won 4 races on a single card, it took a long trip through the charts on Equibase to discover this: on November 24, 2009, she won with 4 consecutive rides at Woodbine. On August 9, 2008, also at Woodbine, Sutherland had a 5-win afternoon and incredibly, she won for 5 different trainers and 5 different owners.

Her brilliant work on July 24 lifted her to 30 wins and into 8th place in the very competitive jockey standings at Gulfstream.

The Hambletonian: Captain Corey Was the Story

He had to work for it, but Captain Corey, steered aggressively by Ake Svanstedt, proved to be the best in the 96th Hambletonian for \$1,000,000 at the Meadowlands on August 7. Svanstedt took Captain Corey straight to the top from post 4, but with Cuatro De Julio (Lucas Wallin) pressuring on the outside, the first quarter went in a gasping :26. Captain Corey was still in charge



Captain Corey led all the way

at the half in :54, with multiple contenders stacked up behind him. By the time the field passed $\frac{3}{4}$ in 1:22.3, Captain Corey was still there, but Cuatro De Julio was losing interest, like Julio's cat after too much milk.

Despite the torrid fractions, Captain Corey still had sufficient trot for the final quarter, getting to the wire in a career best of 1:51, a length clear of longshot Spy Booth (Tim Tetrick) who flew up late along the rail.

"He was strong today," said a cheerful Svanstedt. "He had good heart and fight, but he was strong also. I was worried that they were going to come from behind, but he fought good."

Svanstedt not only drove the winner, but he is also the

trainer, and shares ownership with SRF Stable, Knutsson Trotting and Midnight Sun Partners. This was Svanstedt's second Hambletonian victory, but the first time he drove the winner to first place. In 2017, he finished second with Perfect Spirit, who was awarded first after a disqualification of the initial winner, What The Hill.

Midnight Sun's Robert Lindstrom was the man who identified Captain Corey as a yearling in 2019 and recommended the purchase

"I'm so happy for all of us, all the connections around the horse," said Lindstrom. "The Svanstedt team has done a marvelous job and we have friends in parts of Sweden watching the TV now that couldn't come. I just want to greet them."

Rockyroad Hanover out-paced Perfect Sting



That was Captain Corey's 8th win in 12 races, and he boosted his earnings to \$915,333.

That is slightly more than the bettors got. The win ticket was \$4.60.

The Hambletonian was the 15th race on a monster card at the Meadowlands. Race 14 was the \$500,000

Hambletonian Oaks for 3-year-old fillies. Bella Bellini was pounded down to 1-2 and she justified that support with an authoritative win, circling rivals at the $\frac{3}{4}$ and pulling away in the stretch with a :26.3 final quarter for Dexter Dunn. The mile was completed in 1:52.1. Bella



Bellini is trained by "Nifty" Norman for owner David McDuffie, and with her 7th victory in 18 starts, she returned just \$3.

Almost buried in the huge program was the \$276,150 Cane Pace for 3-year-old pacers. Bradley Grant of Hanover is part owner of Rockyroad Hanover, so he reached his maximum cardio. Driven by Dexter Dunn, Rockyroad Hanover popped out of 4th just past the half, and worked first over to get the lead. In the final 16th he wore down the 3-5 favourite, Perfect Sting, to win by over a length in 1:48.1. That was the fastest of his 8 wins in his 14th race. Tony Alanga trains Rockyroad Hanover, and Grant shared the triumph with Riverview Racing, Ken Jacobs, Plouffe Head and VJ Stable. The win ticket was \$8.80



THE HORSEMEN'S BENEVOLENT AND PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TAKE NOTICE that an Annual General Meeting of the Horsemen's Benevolent Protective Association of Ontario (hereinafter referred to as the "Association") will be held virtually via Zoom on Saturday, September 25th, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. for the following purpose:

1. To approve the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held September 26th, 2020;
2. To receive the report of the auditors for year ended March 31, 2021; and the pension plan for year ended December 31, 2020
3. To appoint the auditors for the Corporation;
4. To report on the activities of the Association;

DATED at the City of Toronto, in the Province of Ontario.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lesley Barker, Executive Assistant

MEMBERS ONLY—RSVP IS REQUIRED BY MONDAY SEPTEMBER 20th, 2021

135 Queen's Plate Drive,
Suite 420
Toronto, Ontario M9W 6V1

Telephone: 416-747-5252 / 1-866-779-3067

Fax: 416-747-9606

Email: general@hbpa.on.ca / Website: www.hbpa.on.ca

Mark Casse: “Woodbine got me into the Hall of Fame”

Already a most deserving member of the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame, trainer Mark Casse, 60, was inducted into the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame at Saratoga on August 7. For Casse, it was full circle, remembering racing experiences with his father, Norman, who passed away in 2016.

“I’d been coming to Saratoga with my dad for 50 years,” says Casse. “I first came to the Hall of Fame when I was very young with my dad, so this is very special.”

The induction ceremonies honoured Casse along with trainers Todd Pletcher and Jack Fisher, jockey Darrel McHargue, and racehorses Wise Dan and Tom Bowling.

During his speech at the Hall of Fame, Casse practically brought the crowd to tears with a seminal and emotional story about his parents’ marital breakup.

“I was 13 when my mom and dad got divorced,” he says. “It was pretty well decided that I was supposed to go with my mom even though that’s not what I wanted to do because I would not have been around horses or horse racing. My dad kept saying, ‘You’ll be okay. I’ll make sure you get a racing form every day.’ Yeah, I was a 13-year-old concerned with getting a racing form every day, and he said, ‘You know, we’ll spend as much time together as we can. I’ll take you to all the races.’ I was just extremely distraught and finally, one day, I went up to my mom and I just said, ‘Mom, do you love me?’ And she said, ‘Of course, with all my heart.’ And I said, ‘Mom if you truly love me, let me stay with Dad.’ And that day, she said, ‘Okay, you stay with your father.’”

To this day, Casse recalls that decision with great warmth and affection.

“Sometimes to show your love, you have to give up something up that is dearest to you,” he says softly, “And to this day, my mom, who is now 80, watches every race that she can. We talk frequently and I couldn’t have asked for a better mom. She made the biggest sacrifice any mom could do. She put my wishes ahead of what she wanted. I consider that true love.”

That, of course, allowed the young Casse to be immersed in thoroughbred racing. He was still a teenager when he trained his first horse.

“My dad found out that Massachusetts was one place where you could get a trainer’s license at 17,” he recalls. “I’m probably one of the few trainers that ever trained a horse at 17.”

At the beginning of his career, Casse sent out horses at Churchill Downs. He also worked at the now defunct Sportsman’s Park (Illinois) and Rockingham Park (Salem, New Hampshire). In 1988, he set a record when he recorded 29 wins during the spring meet at Churchill Downs. Those 29 wins came from 138 starters, a strike rate of 21%.

“I think that record stood for 25 years,” he says.

But Churchill and Kentucky turned out to be less than ideal for Casse.

“I thought their meets were terrible,” he says.



“There was very little grass racing at Churchill Downs. Churchill Downs was an ‘A’ meet, but then you went to Ellis Park, which was a ‘C’ or ‘D’ meet. Then you had to go to Keeneland and for me, that just didn’t work.”

Through his first wife, Kathy Patton, Casse was introduced to Woodbine. It would change his life and his career. According to Equibase, Casse’s first runners at Woodbine appeared in 1998 and, not coincidentally, his win rate began to shoot up dramatically.

“I asked for some stalls for the summer at Woodbine and I brought some horses up and enjoyed it,” he said.

The fact that the Woodbine meet runs from early April into December gave Casse the luxury of being in the same place for several months, then going south to Ocala when both he and the horses could recuperate.

In 2006, Casse trained 67 winners at Woodbine, and won his first Sovereign Award as Canada’s Outstanding Trainer. It was the first of 13 such trophies. Asked if Woodbine is his “foundation” track on his route to the American Horse Racing Hall of Fame, Casse does not equivocate.

“Without Woodbine and without Toronto, Mark Casse would not be in the Hall of Fame,” he states. “If you look at some of the great horses that I’ve trained over the years, pretty well every one of them has some ties to Woodbine. I have said that there is no better place to get a horse ready to run and to train than Woodbine. It has it all. I love the Tapeta. We have the best grass course in North America. We also have dirt training, a dirt course as well as a turf training course.”

Casse makes an interesting self-criticism about his Hall of Fame status,

“Five years ago, did I deserve to be in the National Hall of Fame?” he asks. “I would have said ‘No, I don’t.’ I didn’t feel necessarily that I’d done enough to

deserve it. I deserve to be in the Canadian Hall of Fame, simply because of how well we’ve done in Canada, but I felt like I needed to do more in the U.S. I felt after we won 5 Breeders’ Cups and then winning the Queen Anne Stakes at Royal Ascot with Tepin was something special. Then, I started to think ‘maybe I do deserve to be in there.’”

The voters, who are members of the horse racing media, did not immediately warm up to the idea of Casse in the Hall of Fame. To be eligible, a candidate must get over 50% of the vote and that didn’t happen the first couple of years. Casse needed to do something to get the voters’ attention, and he did.

In 2019, War of Will won the Preakness Stakes. Three weeks later, the Belmont winner was Sir Winston. Both horses were trained by Mark Casse.

“Winning the Preakness and the Belmont in the same year with two different horses,” says Casse, “I think only three trainers have ever done that. I thought then that I definitely deserved to be in the Hall of Fame and luckily, so did the voters.”

Every year, those in the industry who vote for the Sovereign Awards are faced with a small problem. How do you vote for anyone else but Mark Casse in the trainer category? Thirteen times, Casse has sent out the most horses, recorded the most winners, and amassed the most purse earnings. One has to check off his name, but after a while the brain suffers a sort of carpal tunnel distress. Does Casse understand the “anyone but Casse” mentality?

“I think that for me, to continue to win The Sovereign, I have to not just win. I have to win big,” he says. “I’m sure there’s lots of owners and trainers that are tired of us winning every year, but that’s not my fault. I can only do the best that I can do. I know there was some people that thought that Josie Carroll probably should have won in 2020, and if she had, I would have understood.”

Carroll was certainly the home team choice for Outstanding Trainer last year. She pulled off the rare accomplishment of sweeping the Canadian Triple Crown with two horses – Mighty Heart in the Queen’s Plate and Prince of Wales, and Belichick in the Breeders’ Stakes. But, at the end of the day, Casse’s 480 starts, his 93 wins (49 more than Norm McKnight in 2nd place) and the \$5,371,067 earned by his horses were just too much for the voters to ignore.

And despite the constant honours heaped on his plate, it never gets ordinary for him.

“I can tell you that I still consider it a great honour and I will do everything I can to continue to win it. It’s important to me,” he says, earnestly. “I used to wonder when the Yankees won the World Series a few years in a row, what drives you to win again and it’s you don’t want to lose. I don’t take it lightly. I still want to win the Sovereign and I’ll do whatever I can. I try to win races to win the Sovereign Award. I try to do the best I can for all the people that I work for, all the owners who put their trust in me.”

Ismael Mosqueira is Hitting His Peak



Ismael Mosqueira and daughter Mikayla

He's a triple threat. Jockey Ismael Mosqueira picks up mounts at Fort Erie, wins races at Woodbine and, as this issue hit the internet newsstand, was the leading rider at Ajax Downs.

Born in Mexico, Mosqueira started his career in his native country, but was soon lured to Canada.

"I had a couple of friends from Mexico, when I was riding there that were invited to Hastings Park in Vancouver," he says. "They did pretty good and an owner I knew, who had horses in Mexico, also had horses at Hastings."

Mosqueira began riding on Canada's west coast in 2007. He admits that, at the time, he wasn't a challenge to the top jockeys.

"It was kind of rough because my English was not very good," he says. "I was pretty shy and not accustomed to the bullring. So the first two years weren't very good. But in the third year, it started picking up. I was quite successful, and my agent invited me to join him at Turf Paradise in Arizona. After that, I met trainer Robertino Diodoro and he was the one that made my transfer possible from Hastings to Northlands Park."

Riding almost exclusively at Hastings in 2009, Mosqueira won 31 races and his horses earned \$417,442.

He began in 2010 riding at Gulfstream before the Hastings meet began. In late fall of that year, he was riding at Turf Paradise. The next year, he bounced around from Turf Paradise to Hastings to Northlands Park in Edmonton. This is what good jockeys do. They travel wherever an owner or trainer requires them. Mosqueira could probably sing a few verses of Johnny Cash's *I've Been Everywhere*.

"I've gone to Florida, to New Mexico, to Portland Meadows in Oregon," he says. "I went overseas to Macau and Hong Kong. I travel quite a bit, thanks to this profession."

Wherever he ended up, Mosqueira always

thought about riding racehorses at Woodbine. That didn't happen until 2016, his 10th year of professional riding, and he considers that timing to be a blessing.

"Woodbine was always the track I loved the most ever since I came to Canada," he says. "I always wanted to be there and ride there and win races there. It took me a long time to get there, and I am happy about that because I probably would not have been as experienced. Woodbine has such a talented jockey colony, and you have to be skilful enough to get horses and win. I might not have been ready if it had happened earlier."

Mosqueira's first riding assignment in Ontario came aboard a 4-year-old filly named Wolverina's Willa and he made a great first impression, winning by almost 3 lengths in a \$10,000 claim race at a mile and a 16th. That was in September of 2016, but it didn't happen quite so quickly at Woodbine. Mosqueira rode 59 consecutive losers before finally finding the winner's circle on November 25 with a 5-year-old mare by the name of Teatote, scoring by 1 ½ lengths at a mile and a 16th in another \$10,000 claim event. He would win twice more before the meet ended, producing a 3 for 97 stat.

The next year went much better. Mosqueira won 27 races and his horses earned over \$730,000.

He certainly fits the definition of the "journeyman" jockey. Now in his 15th year of riding, Mosqueira has ridden over 4,000 horses with 391 wins (and counting). Those are his thoroughbred stats. In 2018, he began riding quarter horses at Ajax Downs. Equibase credits him with 34 wins from 178 rides with that species.

This year, he is still seeking his first win at Fort Erie but has 3 seconds from just 7 mounts. At Woodbine, he has won 4 times from 36 assignments. He scored with Franco's Honour (\$22.50) for trainer Sandra Dominguez, then with Sweet Sydney (\$8.80) for Abraham Katryan, Lion Kingdom (\$17.50) for Richard Morden, and Valley Girl (\$13.80) also for Dominguez.

We're not going to list his quarter horse wins, because that would be too much work. After the August 11 card at Ajax Downs, Mosqueira had a meet leading 13 wins from 37 rides – that's a strike rate of 35%. He has never won a riding championship in his career, but he is certainly genetically predisposed to succeed on both thoroughbreds and quarter horses.

"Mostly, all the knowledge I have I owe to my father, Eliud, because he was a thoroughbred jockey and a quarter horse jockey as well," he says. "He was very successful in both breeds. So I always look at what he has to say, how to make the transition, so it doesn't get in the way from riding one breed to another. When I was riding in

Arizona, I had some experience with the mixed breeds, thoroughbreds versus quarter horses at 870 yards. The races at Los Alamitos in California were 4 ½ furlongs and 870 yards."

Mosqueira insists that his success at Ajax Downs needs to be shared.

"A huge part of my success has been trainer Jason Pascoe and his wife, Bryanna and their grooms, Laura and Zack," he says. "And all the other trainers. I have been so blessed to win for so many trainers: Bryn Robertson, Bob Broadstock, Carol McIntyre and Tom Dunlap."

Milana Kwiecien owns a few horses who have succeeded with Mosqueira in the saddle.

"We try to match the horse to the rider," Kwiecien tells us. "Ismael has been an incredible rider for us. He tries every time. He's a classy rider and his skills are improving every day."

This is an uplifting story about a versatile jockey, whose career, even in his 30s, appears to be arcing upward, but it's even nicer than that. Mosqueira is the father of a 7-year-old girl. Her name is Mikayla, and after an exhausting period of legal discussions with the girl's mother, it was determined she was better off in Toronto than Edmonton.

"Now my kid lives with me full-time and I have a healthy relationship with her mom," says Mosqueira. "We're all happy and this was all for the good of the little girl."

There is a third party involved here. Mosqueira's dad, Eliud has also moved in, and his presence allows the hard-working jockey to continue plying his trade. And there have been weeks when that plying was all 7 days: Fort Erie on Monday and Tuesday, Ajax Downs on Wednesday, and Woodbine Thursday through Sunday.

"My dad now lives full-time with me," he says. "So, now I can come to work and ride and focus on what I need to do without worrying about her. It's a blessing right now to have both of them supporting me to achieve all these goals I have."

Thanks to that family dynamic, Ismael Mosqueira has had the pleasure of winning races with his daughter in attendance.

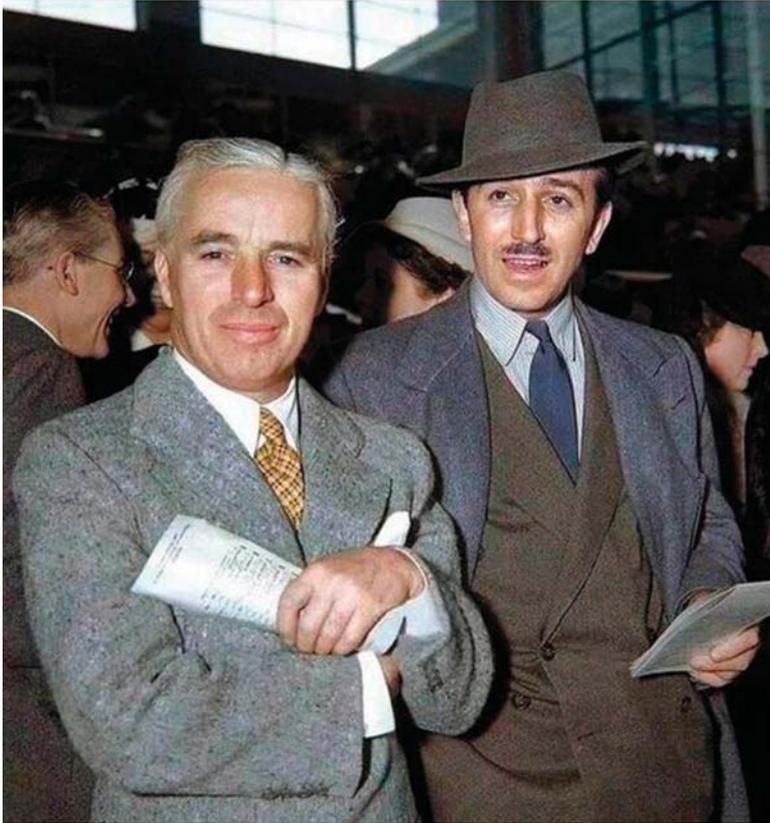
"When I win and she is present, it feels amazing, because I used to be like that in the winner's circle for my dad, and now to have my father and my kid in the winner's circle is indescribable."

Mosqueira's English may have been troublesome many years ago when he first started riding in Canada, but when asked about the experience of race riding, he provides an answer that is sheer poetry.

"The second before the gates open, it's tension, it's nervous," he says. "Then there's the adrenalin and the joy because I am doing the one thing that I have a passion for. When the gates spring, it's like the doors to heaven are opening."

ODDITIES & ENTITIES

Charlie Chaplin and Walt Disney at Santa Anita, 1939



Self-inflicted?

The 6th race at Colonial Downs in Virginia on August 9 was a 5 ½ furlong dash for \$16,000 claimers with an attractive purse of \$32,000. Shelly Island, ridden by Sheldon Russell, won the race easily, safe by 4 ½ lengths as the 2-1 favourite. But the horse that finished 2nd, Tempting Moment (Maria Skaldafjerri), had an incident down the backstretch when another horse, Storm Struck, lost his momentum along the rail. Storm Struck's jockey James Vail lodged a claim of foul against Tempting Moment and, after viewing the video, the stewards disqualified Tempting Moment and placed him 7th. The angle here is that both Tempting Moment and the inconvenienced Storm Struck are owned and trained by Leanne Hester, and the DQ meant she would not collect the \$6,000 for finishing second. One supposes that the next time Hester enters two horses in the same race, she'll instruct her jockeys to stay clear of each other.

If he just understood the whip rule....

Michael Bellman, a top-rated harness driver in Australia was penalized by the Victoria Racing Tribunal for a thoughtless and unacceptable act.

On October 9, 2020, in the paddock before a race, Bellman apparently noticed a female driver who was not wearing a mask, as was required under the covid-19 rules at Geelong Racetrack. Bellman flicked his whip between the woman's thighs, asking, "Where's your mask?"

On August 17, 2021, the Tribunal described Bellman's actions as "**more than just stupid. They were completely wrong.**"

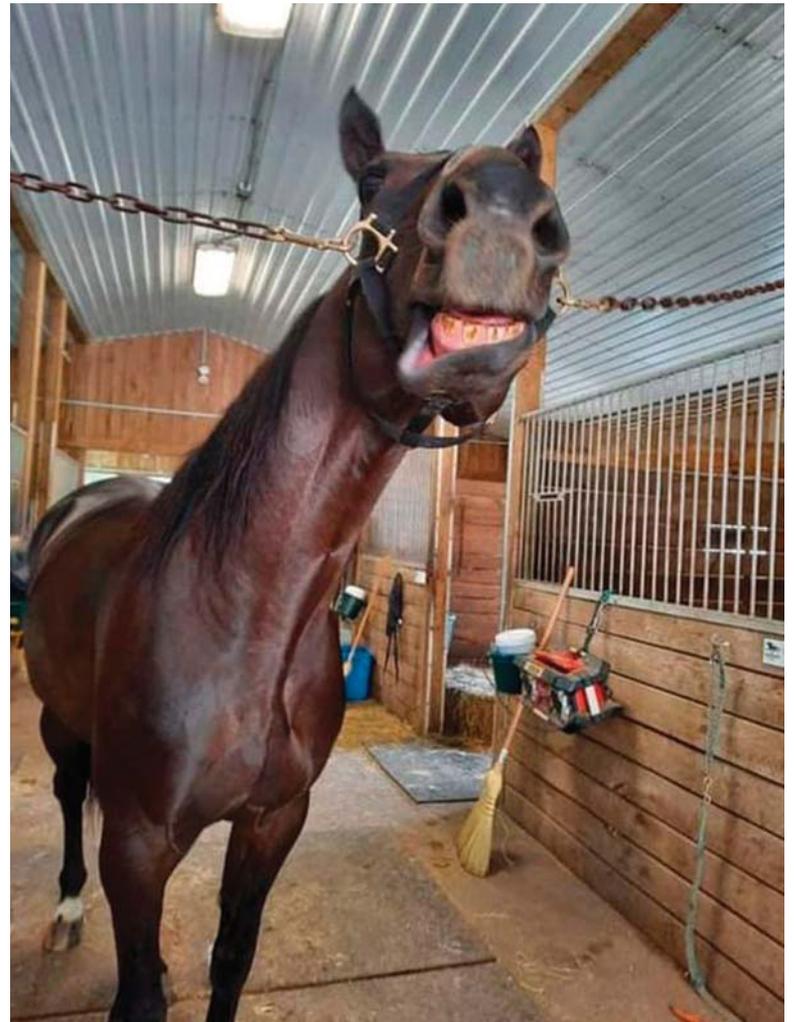
After conducting its investigation, the Tribunal determined that: *Putting a whip between a female's thighs from behind and using it in a flicking motion is totally unacceptable. The purpose of the Rule is to protect those working in the harness racing industry.*

It is also important that women of all ages are encouraged to participate in the industry without having to deal with improper interference.

In all the circumstances, we impose a penalty of 3 months suspension.



This is the excruciatingly close photo of the finish of race 3 at Woodbine on August 13. The 3-horse, Canola World (Jodeien Anderson) dead-heated for the win, with #4 One Punch Charlie (Jeffrey Alderson) and, if you looked very closely, you can see that #5, Colton's Dream (Shaun Bridgmohan) was the tiniest of noses behind in 3rd, while #7, Maakwa (Larry Munoz) was about 2 inches later in 4th. Warren LeBlance trains Canola World for Kenny Ng and Anthony Pottinger sent out one Punch Charlie, a horse he shares with Anthony Powell and Dale Pottinger. Canola World paid \$7.50 to win. One Punch Charlie was worth \$6.



I got my tip straight from the horse's mouth!



WAGER ON LIVE RACING
WITH A HPIbet ACCOUNT

GET \$100*

PLUS YOUR FIRST BET IS ON US!†



- Ability to Bet online or onsite, any time
- **FREE** to watch up to 4 live streams simultaneously
- Bet on over 500 tracks from around the world
- Receive HPIbet Rewards and much more!



LIVE RACING.
HAPPENING NOW AT
HPIbet.COM

JOIN FOR FRE TODAY.



Visit HPIbet.com and click Promotions to view full terms and conditions. Know when to take the reins. ResponsibleGambling.org