

DOWN THE STRETCH

CANADA'S MOST INFORMATIVE AND ENTERTAINING HORSE RACING NEWSPAPER

Breeders' Cup

Pages 12-13



Emma-Jayne Wilson: I'm coming back!

Page 5



She rode Moira the most!



Page 14

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THE EDITOR WEIGHS IN



I have this ability to sometimes piss people off (multiple heads nod).

Two years ago, after winning the Queen's Plate, **Moira** ran in the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Turf at Keeneland. **Frankie Dettori** got her off to a slow start, and though she ran gamely passing others 6-wide into the stretch, she could do no better than 5th behind the winner, Tuesday. In a subsequent episode of the *Down The Stretch Podcast*, I said something to the effect that Moira did not run a "great" race. Shortly after that, a lady named **Korina McLean** took issue with me on social media, suggesting I didn't know what I was talking about. At the time, I did not know that McLean was Moira's exercise rider.

Fast forward 2 years. Moira runs brilliantly in the Fillies and Mares Turf at Del Mar, winning under **Flavien Prat** by half a length at almost 6-1. I call McLean, and after an awkward moment when we recall our previous interaction, we agree that we are on the same page about this wonderful mare, and, over the phone, we hug it out. Moira's definitive victory is part of our Breeders' Cup spread on pages 12-13 and McLean's experience at Del Mar is on page 14.

The last few weeks have been full of big money horse races. The Breeders Crown at the Meadowlands is broken down on page 11, and as you will see, **James MacDonald** not only had a great night in the sulky, but he also got an intimate embrace from his beautiful wife, Paige. Mohawk

Park hosted a night of OSS Super Finals, and we chronicle that on page 4.

We didn't need to be reminded, but horse racing is still a dangerous game. We touched base with **Emma-Jayne Wilson** (page 5), who insists she will ride competitively again, even as she is recovering from a broken neck and repaired pelvis.

When 3 horses died on November 9 at Woodbine, the phrase "abundance of caution" was activated, and races were cancelled that day and the next. On page 15, Woodbine's General Counsel and Executive Vice-President of Racing **Bill Ford** tells *Down The Stretch* just what the track is doing to assure safe racing conditions.

It was not the fault of the racing surface on November 22, when 5 horses and jockeys went down in the most frightening accident in many years at Woodbine. We report that none of the horses were seriously hurt, but the riders have various injuries (page 15).

Australian jockey, **Robbie Dolan** had 2 great moments this year. He was a successful contestant on *The Voice* (the Aussie version of the singing competition) and then he delivered a 109-1 shot in the Melbourne Cup, Australia's most important race. Read about this on page 10.

We have now scratched out at least 300 Owner of the Month profiles in 17 years, and our Standardbred Owner of the Month, **Ozzie MacKay**, has set the record with the earliest racetrack experience. Find out what that was on page 19. **Robyn Brohman** is our Thoroughbred Owner of the Month (page 18) and tells us that when **Taquanyah** won the Eternal Search Stakes, it was her "best day ever in racing."

Both Fort Erie and Ajax Downs concluded their racing season. On page 17, find out what happened in the traditional 2-mile Tour De Fort, and on page 21, the great **Had To Be Ivory** needed less than 7 seconds to win for the 29th time in his excellent career.

There's other neat stuff in this issue – our 147th and the last for 2024. There are 3 pages (6-8) of Woodbine Stakes results in which we reference **Sid Attard, Fraser Aebly, Josie Carroll, Eswan Flores, Patrick Dixon, Mark Casse, Sahin Civaci, Ryan Munger, Lorne Richards, Kevin Attard, Rafael Hernandez, Angus Buntain, Leo Salles, Saul McHugh, Jeffrey Alderson, Declan Carroll, Brendan Walsh, Kazushi Kimura, Keveh Nicholls, Rodney Barrow, ET Baird, Larry Rivelli and Zeljko Krcmar**, just to name a few!

Our layout man, Gord Steventon appreciated Moira's Breeders' Cup win so much, he created a witty cartoon with a **Schitt's Creek** theme. And for the 147th time in a row, on page 22, we have a full sheet of **Oddities & Entities** – the stories and images that don't fit anywhere else and remind us just how unique the sport of horse racing is.

The next issue of *Down The Stretch* – in early January – will, for the 18th time, feature our Top 50 Stories of the Year. There's a pretty good chance we will piss some people off with our selections.

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OSS Gold Super Finals October 12

21 races for trainer Robert Fellows. The filly is owned by Dr. Sara Gatchell, Jake and Reg Higgs, and Yolanda Fellows and the win ticket was \$4.30.

Three-Year-Old Colts and Geldings Trot:

You Got It Kemp was the 6-5 favourite and Sylvain Filion drove accordingly. Filion gunned You Got It Kemp straight to the top from post 9, carved out professional fractions of :28.0, :56.4 and 1:25.4, and completed

Doug McNair took advantage of the new rule, parlaying live cover at the half into a powerful finish that had Crack Shot winning by 1 ¼ lengths in 1:51.3. The rookie colt is trained by Greg McNair, who shares it with Dale Hunter, Frank Brundle and George Kerr. Crack Shot won for the 5th time in 8 tries and paid \$7.40.

Three-Year-Old Colts and Geldings Trot:



You Got It Kemp

New Image Media Photo

the mile with a :28 final quarter to win by 5 expanding lengths in 1:53.4 for trainer Dan Legace. You Got It Kemp improved to 5 for 6 in his career for his owners Brady, Brooke, and Daniel Legace and Suojalampi Stable and the win price was \$4.50.

Three-Year-Old Fillies Pace:

The two favourites, It's A Love Thing (James MacDonald) and Odds On Platinum (Sylvain Filion) were locked in a death struggle all down the stretch until Odds On Platinum got to the finish line a head better in 1:49.4.



Odds On Platinum

New Image Media Photo

Trainer Dr. Ian Moore prepared the horse for Let It Ride Stables and Odds On Racing. Odds On Platinum improved to 8 for 26 and with his share of the purse, pushed his career earnings to \$1,049,374, which was slightly more than the \$8.90 the win bettors got.

Two-Year-Old Colts and Geldings Pace:



Crack Shot

New Image Media Photo

Crack Shot may just have been the story of the night. He won his \$75,000 Grass Roots final and when this Super Final didn't get a 10th entry, he was allowed in.



Paquet

New Image Media Photo

Paquet went off at 1-5, erupted from 5th down the backstretch and won convincingly by over 4 lengths. Despite that, driver Jody Jamieson was surprisingly very frank right after the race.

"This horse was just rude tonight," said Jamieson, "just absolutely ignorant. When the gate called us, he was galloping and throwing his head – just rude. But he's so talented, I guess he overcame it. Don't get me wrong. I'm very happy that we won, but we've got some work to do with this young horse."

Paquet improved to 4 for 6 for his career. He is trained by Carl Jamieson, who owns with the Estate of Brian Paquet and Douglas Good. Paquet paid just \$2.40.

Three-Year-Old Colts and Geldings Pace:



Nijinsky

New Image Media Photo

A night of low payoffs in the Super Finals concluded with the heavily bet Nijinsky winning and paying just \$2.50, though for much of the race, that outcome seemed in doubt. Just before the ¾, Century Komodo, hung on the outside, locked on a line and faltered badly, forcing Nijinsky to check and lose several lengths. However, Louis-Philippe Roy still had a lot of horse, and Nijinsky made up the lost ground, powered to the front in deep stretch and got to the wire a length the best in 1:50.3. Tony Beaton trains both the winner and the 2nd place horse, Best Night Ever. Nijinsky notched his 11th win from 22 starts for his owners West Wins Stable, John Fielding and Mark Dumain.



OSS GOLD SUPER FINAL • LIL SWEET • \$300,000

to take on THE WORLD

There were 8 OSS Gold Super Final races Saturday, October 12 at Mohawk, each one worth \$300,000, and each one crowning a champion in their respective division.

Two-Year-Old Fillies Trot:

Monalishi was crushed down to .35 as the favourite, but in deep stretch, Doug McNair finished an ideal trip with Lil Sweet, came outside the choice and inched to the lead, getting to the wire a neck the best in 1:53.3. Lil Sweet is trained by Dave Menary and owned by Eric Good. This was just the 2nd win in 10 races for Lil Sweet who paid \$8.40.

Two-Year-Old Fillies Pace:



Chantilly

New Image Media Photo

Based on her 8 for 9 record, Chantilly (James MacDonald) was bet down to the minimum 5 cents on the dollar, and there was never any doubt. She surged to the lead before the half, and with subsequent quarters of :27.4 and :26.4, not only discouraged the rest of the field, but pulled away late to win by over 6 lengths in 1:50.2. The trainer is Nick Galluci for Millar Farms, and all the successful bettors got was \$2.10.

Three-Year-Old Fillies Trot:

Willys Home Run popped out of 3rd before the half and just kept widening her advantage for James MacDonald. The pair was almost 4 lengths the best in 1:53.1. Willys Home Run won for the 10th time in



Willy's Home Run

New Image Media Photo

Emma-Jayne Wilson Battles On



Jockey Emma-Jayne Wilson experienced both ends of the race riding spectrum in 2024. On July 11, in the 5th race, she rode the 3-year-old filly, Perfect Lady Bee to victory for trainer Roger Attfield and, in doing so, passed the legendary Julie Krone as the woman achieving the most in purse money. At the time, that figure was \$90,153,109, a mind-boggling sum reflecting both Wilson's physical accomplishments and her longevity.

On October 25, Wilson suffered the worst spill of her 20-year career. She was riding Ready Shakespeare, a 4-year-old gelding, also trained by Attfield. It was a \$25,000 claim race and early down the backstretch, the horse suffered

doing as well as can be expected in this situation. To be honest, I'm getting the best of care. I've had quite a lot of messages of support and little gifts of 'get well soon' that have meant a lot to me. I was able to get transferred closer to home, so my family has been able to stop by and see me and give me love, which has been very beneficial as well."

Wilson has always acknowledged the danger of her sport and has always jumped on the back of thoroughbreds with a fearlessness most of us could never understand. We've grown to understand that she has a high pain threshold.

"I've got broken bones," she says. "It's not the most comforting scenario, so I'm definitely getting required necessary medication. But to be honest, it's not as bad as it could be."

Wilson never lost consciousness after the fall and has complete memory of what happened.

"It was a freak kind of catastrophic scenario," she recalls. "My horse went down, and it sent me flying into the underside of the rail, and I hit the upright of the fence with my back. So, in a way, I was lucky in the sense that I hit my pelvis. It could have been worse in any other direction. But because I hit the fence at such velocity, that's what I'm trying to fix and recover from."

Wilson and her wife, Laura have twin 7-year-old girls, Avery and Grace. How difficult is it for them to see their mother hurt?

"They know that I'm a jockey and they know that injuries are part of the territory," says Wilson. "It's not necessarily the easiest to see Mama hurt, but we're helping them through it. My wife is fantastic in that regard, helping them cope with the challenges that come with this. Since I got transferred back near the house, they have been bringing me early morning coffee deliveries before school, which has been a pleasant addition to my day, not just for their presence and smiles and love, but also the coffee in the hospital is terrible."

This isn't Wilson's first serious injury, but as frightening as it appears, it's not enough to discourage her from getting back in a race. She does plan to return



to her job.

"Absolutely," she says with emphasis. "It's always the goal. The focus is full recovery and full capabilities. I plan to return to being Emma Jane Wilson, Top Jock. It may be a little way down the road, but the eyes are on the prize. I am staying focused and just taking one day at a time and going from there."

Wilson is 43. Her fitness level has always been off the charts. Her reputation in the game is extraordinary. She is honest, tough, reliable, knowledgeable and an articulate spokesperson for horse racing. At various times we have pitched the idea that after her riding career she could easily obtain an important executive position in the sport. But she's not ready to consider such a proposition, not yet.

"When I decide to retire, it will cross my mind," she says.

Whenever Emma-Jayne Wilson does hang up her tack, her resumé is brilliant. She has ridden 1,930 winners. She is the only female to ride a Queen's Plate Champion, and her winning work on Mike Fox in the 2007 Plate is arguably the greatest ride in Canadian history. She has won races at Ascot and in the Shergar Cup in Dubai. In 2006, she took down both the Sovereign and Eclipse Awards as outstanding apprentice jockey in Canada and the U.S., and in 2018, she was honoured with the Avelino Gomez Memorial Award, given to those who make a considerable contribution to the sport.



what was considered a cardiac event. Ready Shakespeare went quickly from a contending position, faltering along the inside until he went down, throwing Wilson violently to the all weather track. Ready Shakespeare could not be saved, and Wilson knew immediately that she had been badly hurt.

Down The Stretch talked with Wilson on November 11 as she was recovering.

"I am currently in the hospital convalescing from some pretty serious injuries from the spill," says Wilson. "I am

Woodbine Stakes

October 12, \$152,000 Ontario Damsel Stakes:



A field of thirteen 3-year-old fillies went a mile and $\frac{1}{16}$ th and Witwatersrand with Patrick Husbands went off as the 5-2 favourite. She raced ok, but there was a huge upset as Fraser Aebly orchestrated an ideal trip with Ecstasy, who was 2nd most of the way, surged to the lead as the field turned for home and had plenty left as Witwatersrand passed several rivals late to finish 2nd, almost 2 lengths behind the winner. Even though she had won 3 of her previous 5 races, Ecstasy was pretty well ignored by the bettors, paying \$57.70. Sid Attard trains for Tucci Stable and this was Fraser Aebly's first Stakes win at Woodbine. He would waste no time getting his second.

\$163,000 Ontario Fashion Stakes:



This 6-furlong contest attracted 10 fillies and mares, and if 27-1 was a big price to pay in the previous race, how about 48-1 in this one? Fraser Aebly was aboard A Game and evidently, neither jockey nor horse was aware they had no chance. They were 9th but within 4 lengths after a half mile but started to weave in and amongst others as the field turned. The race was not decided until the final stride as A Game fired between horses at the perfect time to win by head in 1:09.49. Josie Carroll trains for Mark Dodson, and how does this 5-year-old mare pay \$99.20? She had won 2 of her last 5 races with a 2nd and 3rd in there as well.

October 13, \$150,000 Display Stakes:



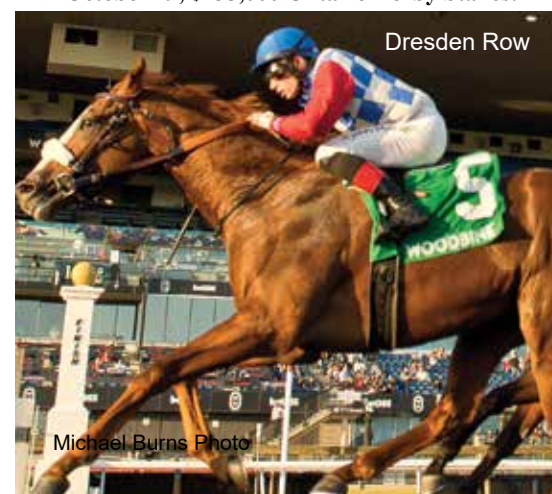
There were just 6 in this one and the bettors did not get things right as the 2 longest shots formed the exactor. Eswan Flores was riding Thundering, and he always had the 2-year-old gelding in the mix. As the field turned for home, Thundering was 3-wide with the most momentum and that carried him to the wire a winner by $1\frac{1}{4}$ lengths in 1:23.64 for the 7 furlongs. Patrick Dixon is the trainer, and the owner is Dastur Racing. Thundering broke his maiden on just his 2nd try and paid \$23.90.

\$150,000 Glorious Song Stakes:



This was for 2-year-old fillies going 7 furlongs and on paper, Winterberry looked the best and accordingly went off at 3-5 under Sahin Civaci. Winterberry stumbled badly as the gates opened and was 5th at the quarter, but when Civaci asked, the horse flew past rivals with ease and had a 5-length lead coming for home. At the wire, the margin was about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a length, as Civaci chose not to abuse the filly. Winterberry won for the 2nd time in 3 races for trainer Mark Casse and owners, D. J. Stable. This was Casse's 27th Stakes win at Woodbine in 2024 and for Civaci, it was his 12th Stakes win, just one behind the leader, Patrick Husbands.

October 19, \$135,000 Ontario Derby Stakes:



A field of seven 3-year-olds went a mile and an 8th, and the 6-5 betting choice, Dresden Row got an ideal ride from Ryan Munger. Munger had Dresden Row in 2nd at the half, with clear focus on the leader, Babbo (Eswan Flores). When that one faltered as the field entered the far turn, Dresden Row surged to the lead, opened up a good 2 lengths in mid-stretch and found the wire a half-length ahead of a late running Bail Us Out (Kazushi Kimura). Dresden Row is trained by Lorne Richards and owned by True North Stable and Jeffrey Bloom's Racing Stable. With a win 3 weeks earlier in the Durham Cup, Dresden

Row has put himself into the 3-year-old colt of the year discussion. He paid \$4.40.

October 20, \$100,000 South Ocean Stakes:



This $6\frac{1}{2}$ furlong dash was the 3rd on the Sunday card because 2-year-old fillies have an early bedtime. Brengungirl was the 1-2 choice in the compact field of 5 and Rafael Hernandez rode her as if she was much the best. She relaxed at the back for the first half of the race, but when asked, she passed rivals with ease and scooted to the finish line almost 5 lengths the best in 1:16.87. Trained by Kevin Attard for the Canuck Racing Club, Brengungirl won for the 2nd time in 2 career races and paid just \$3.10.

\$100,000 Frost Kings Stakes:



Nine 2-year-old colts went $6\frac{1}{2}$ furlongs and it was another fine Stakes ride from Fraser Aebly that helped Unbridled Weather win by a neck in 1:16.58. Aebly had his horse close to the early leader, My Boy Bruce (Sahin Civaci) who led for half a mile in :45.39 before retreating to finish 4th. As My Boy Bruce went backwards, Unbridled Weather was a warm front, surging to the lead as the field turned for home and hanging on to defeat longshot Awesome Rainbow (Leo Salles). It was the gelding's first win in his 4th race for trainer Angus Buntain and his owners, Pier 1 Stables. This was Aebly's 3rd Stakes win in the space of just 8 days and Unbridled Weather paid \$17 to win.

October 26, \$100,000 Eternal Search Stakes:

At $7\frac{1}{2}$ furlongs on the inner turf course, this one attracted 9 fillies and mares. Olivia Rose with Rafael Hernandez went off at 4-5. She had been 1st or 2nd in her last four Stakes races. But Olivia Rose faltered badly after running 2nd for most of the race. She finished over 6 lengths

behind the winner, Taquanyah who gave Leo Salles his first Stakes win of 2024. Taquanyah rallied for 6th down the backstretch and got up late to win by ¾ of a length. The trainer is Saul McHugh for owner Robyn Brohman and both of those horse people got to celebrate their first Stakes wins of the year. Taquanyah, a 6-year-old mare won for the 5th time in 22 starts and paid \$14.10.

October 27, \$100,000 Overskate Stakes:

This time the boys went 7 ½ on the inner turf and Hunt Master brought his aggressive “A” game, going straight to the front for Jeffrey Alderson and leading all the way, lasting just enough to defeat a late-moving Society’s Thunder (Steve Jadoo) by a neck in 1:29.10. This gave trainer Angus Buntain his 2nd Stakes win in 8 days. Hunt Master is a 5-year-old gelding owned by Openwood Farm. This was his 5th win in his 24th race and he paid \$13.90.

November 3, \$135,000 Mazarine Stakes:



A field of nine 2-year-old fillies negotiated a mile and a 16th and this was a case of favourites faltering and longshots prevailing. Foxtastic (Kazushi Kimura) who was 1.90-1, led into the stretch and faded to 5th. Charlotte’s Heart (Rafael Hernandez) was at 1.95-1 and finished last. The winner was Somethingaboutther, and under Declan Carroll she moved from 5th at the half to a contending 2nd entering the stretch. Somethingaboutther went past Foxtastic easily and held on by half a length over a late moving As Catch Can (Vincent Cheminaud). The time for the race was 1:45.00. Somethingaboutther was competing at Woodbine for the first time after 5 races in Kentucky. She is trained by Brendan Walsh and owned by X-Men Racing, Madaket Stables and SF Racing. She paid \$33.70 to win.

\$135,000 Grey Stakes:



The 2-year-old boys also went a mile and a 16th, and this one was also not great for the low-priced horses. Kazushi Kimura was very serious aboard He’s Not Joking, reserving his ride towards the back of the field early, then asking for a response and getting it as He’s Not Joking powered past rivals with a 5-wide move into the stretch. In the lane, the son of Practical Joke had the definitive punch-line, galloping home by 4 lengths in 1:43.18. He’s Not Joking is trained by Josie Carroll and owned by Di Scola Boys Stable. That \$23 win price is very nice for a horse that has never missed the board and was winning for the second time in 4 races.

November 9, \$135,000 Maple Leaf Stakes:



quarter races for fillies and mares and Elysian Field, the 2023 Woodbine Oaks champion got a superb ride from leading jockey Sahin Civaci. Early in the race, Elysian Field was as far back as 10th as Aha Moment (Austin Adams) did the early lifting, taking the field of 11 past ¾ in 1:12.94. Around the far turn, King’s Plate winner, Caitlinhergrtness made an intimidating move to the front under Rafael Hernandez, and when Caitlinhergrtness opened up by 3 lengths in mid-stretch, she certainly looked like the winner. But in the final furlong, several runners found their best stride as Elysian Field had the most momentum, sweeping by late to win by 1 ¼ lengths over Millie Girl (Ryan Munger) with Queen Regent (Oisin Murphy) a half-length back in 3rd. Caitlinhergrtness slumped to 4th.

Elysian Field gave Mark Casse his 28th Stakes training win at Woodbine this year. Last year, when he took down 24 Stakes events, Casse collected his 13th straight Sovereign Award as Outstanding Trainer in Canada. Elysian Field, now 4 for 14, is owned by Gary Barber and Team Valor and she paid \$8.

\$135,000 Bessarabian Stakes:



Tragedy marred this 7 furlong race for fillies and mares. As the field turned for home, Owen’s Tour Guide, the longest shot in the field, took a bad step, went down and had to be humanely euthanized. Jockey Jose Campos was not injured. The winner of the race was Stormcast, ridden by Rafael Hernandez. The 3-year-old filly was on top at the quarter in :23.60, galloped past the half in :46.62 and evidently, those were comfortable fractions as Stormcast got to the wire a half length ahead of a late move from Love to Shop (Justin Stein). The time for the race was 1:22.43. This was another Stakes win for Mark Casse. The filly is owned by K E M Racing Stable, and with her 3rd win in 8 tries, she paid \$8.40.

The on-track death of Owen’s Tour Guide was the 2nd such catastrophe of the day. In the second race, Social Dancer, ridden by David Moran was pulled up and subsequently euthanized. Because of this, Woodbine, after consulting with the HBPA and the Jockeys Guild, cancelled the final two races on the card and cancelled all races the next day.

November 16, \$210,000 Autumn Stakes:



A field of 8 went a mile and an 8th, and 2023 King’s Plate Champion, Paramount Prince (Patrick Husbands) led for the first 6 furlongs, but faded badly before the field turned for home. It was Keveh Nicholls who executed the brightest ride – he rallied Wicked Django from 6th down the backstretch, went 5-wide with impressive momentum just before the stretch drive and galloped to the wire, the best by 1 ¼ lengths. Trained by Rodney Barrow for Ryan Brewster, Wicked Django notched his 3rd win from 12 races and paid \$60.40. This was also Nicholls’ first Stakes win of 2024 at Woodbine.

November 17: \$100,000 Ashbridges Bay Stakes:

A field of 7 3-year-old fillies went a mile and a 16th and War Painter, ridden brightly by Fraser Aebly did it the fastest. War Painter was mid-pack as the field entered the stretch, but Aebly had the filly 4-wide with momentum and she needed all of that to get to the wire first by a head in 1:44.93 War Painter won for the 3rd time in 11 races. She



is owned by Canuck Racing Club and trained by Kevin Attard and she paid \$10.50. Fraser Aebly did not win even one of the first 56 Stakes races at Woodbine, but since then he had captured 4 of the ensuing 16.

\$210,000 Kennedy Road Stakes:

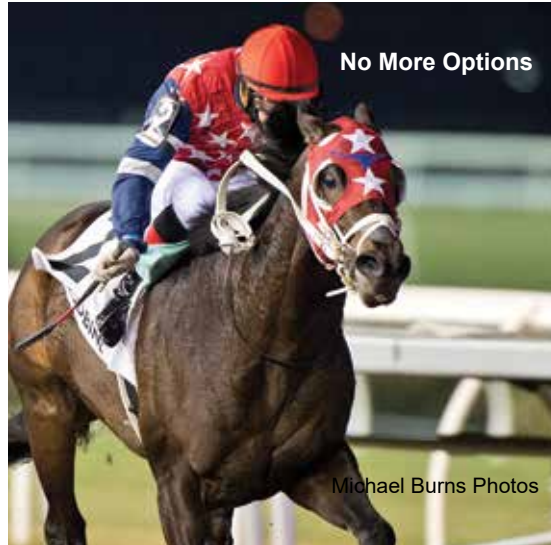
When a horse named Nobals wins, the Association of Racing Writers insists on maximum arrested development references. The 5-year-old, who, of course is gelded, demonstrated maximum cojones under jockey ET Baird to out-finish the 4-5 favourite Patches O’Houlihan in the



6-furlong dash. As Nobals challenged in deep stretch one could hear fans shouting, “Go nads go!” Nobals is trained by Larry Rivelli and his time of 1:08.59 was very good, but a little off the record of 1:07.63 he set 2 years ago in

the Woodstock Stakes. This was Nobal’s 11th win from 22 starts and he paid \$8.40. Those who did not bet on Nobals muttered, “Nuts!”

\$100,000 Lake Ontario Stakes:



Then it was the 3-year-old boys’ turn at a mile and a 16th. No More Options, under Ryan Munger went off at 4-5 and Munger rode as if he had the best horse, stalking the early pace of Jo Daddy (Sahin Civaci), grabbing the lead before the stretch and galloping home without a threat. No More Options was almost 3 lengths the best in 1:44.66. This made the 3-year-old colt 5 for 14 for trainer Zeljko Krcmar and owner Mary Self. No More Options paid \$3.90.

November 23, \$150,000 Shady Well Stakes:

It doesn’t make sense to bet a 2-year-old filly down to 1-5. Specifically, Winterberry (Patrick Husbands) went off at .25 and didn’t hit the board. Sahin Civaci put Pop Idol on the lead early and was never seriously challenged, winning by 2 ½ lengths in 1:10.62 for the 6 furlongs. Katerina Vassilieva trains for George Weaver and R. A. Hill Stable. With her 3rd win in 6 tries, Pop Idol paid \$12.90.

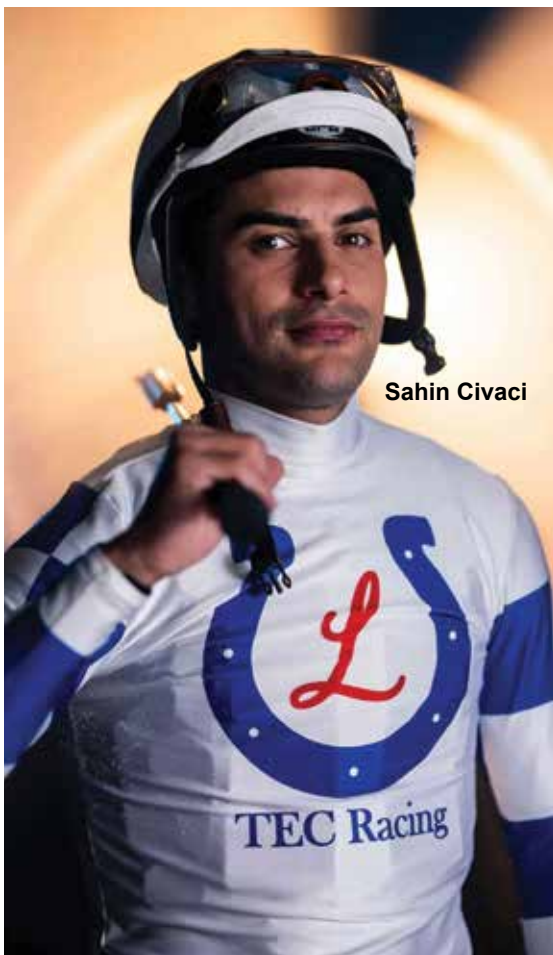
November 24, \$150,000 Clarendon Stakes:



A compact field of 6 went 6 furlongs, and getting the lead early was a winning tactic for Leo Salles and Mansetti. The pair passed the half mile mark in a speedy :44.91, which apparently discouraged all followers, as Mansetti found the finish line 1 ¼ lengths the best in 1:10.81. Trained by Kevin Attard for Al and Bill Ulwelling, Mansetti won for the 2nd time in 3 tries and paid \$11.60.

Civaci Winning In Batches

For a few months now, it’s been apparent that Sahin Civaci has been the best jockey at Woodbine. Any doubt about that was erased on Saturday, November 24



when he found the winner’s circle 6 times on a 10-race card.

Civaci’s most excellent day began in the first race, as he got out of the way of the 1-5 favourite, Souper Success, who romped by 5 lengths in this optional claim at 5 furlongs. Souper Success is an 8-year-old gelding who won for the 9th time in his 52nd race. He is trained by Marty Drexler for Bruno Schickedanz, and he paid just \$2.60.

Civaci then won the 4th race with Little Red Domi, who was the best of nine \$25,000 claimers in this 5 ½ furlong dash. Little Red Domi was racing for the first time for trainer Kevin Attard and the Terra Racing Stable and he paid \$7.30.

Then Civaci proceeded to carve out a personal pick-3. He captured race 6 as McGill out-galoped 6 other 2-year-olds at 6 furlongs. McGill is a filly trained by Kevin Attard and owned by X-Men Racing and Madaket Stables, and the win ticket was \$6.60.

Race 7 required 8 special weight fillies and mares to go 6 furlongs and Civaci timed it perfectly with She Loves,

getting up by a head in 1:11.42. She Loves is a 3-year-old filly trained by John LeBlanc for Equus Holdings. By breaking her maiden on the 2nd try, She Loves paid \$3.70.

The 8th race was the \$150,000 Shady Well Stakes for 2-year-old fillies. The distance was 6 furlongs, and the bettors crushed Winterberry (Patrick Husbands) down to 1-5. That was cash down the drain as Winterberry faded to 5th. Civaci put Pop Idol on the lead right out of the gate, executed comfortable fractions of :45.30 and :57.45, and came home unchallenged to win by over 2 lengths in 1:10.62. Pop Idol has won half her 6 starts for trainer Katerina Vassilieva and the owners, R. A. Hill Stable and George Weaver. Civaci’s 5th winner of the day paid \$12.90. This was Civaci’s 15th Stakes win of the season, the most of all jockeys at Woodbine (just in case Sovereign Award voters have any doubt about the most deserving jockey.)

The 10th and last race on November 23 was for \$10,000 filly and mare claimers at a mile and a 16th and Civaci’s mount, Mizzen Ash went off at 1-2 and was ridden as if she was much the best. Civaci kept Mizzen Ash close for the first 6 furlongs, went after the leaders around the far turn and had lots in the tank for the stretch run, winning by almost 6 lengths. Mizzen Ash is a 6-year-old mare, and this was her 8th win from 40 races. She is trained by Michael Mattine for Maria Andrews, and she produced a \$3 win ticket.

With those 6 wins, Civaci surged to 145 victories at Woodbine this year, 28 ahead of Rafael Hernandez with just 13 cards remaining. This was the point at which **Down The Stretch** crowned Civaci the champion jockey for 2024.

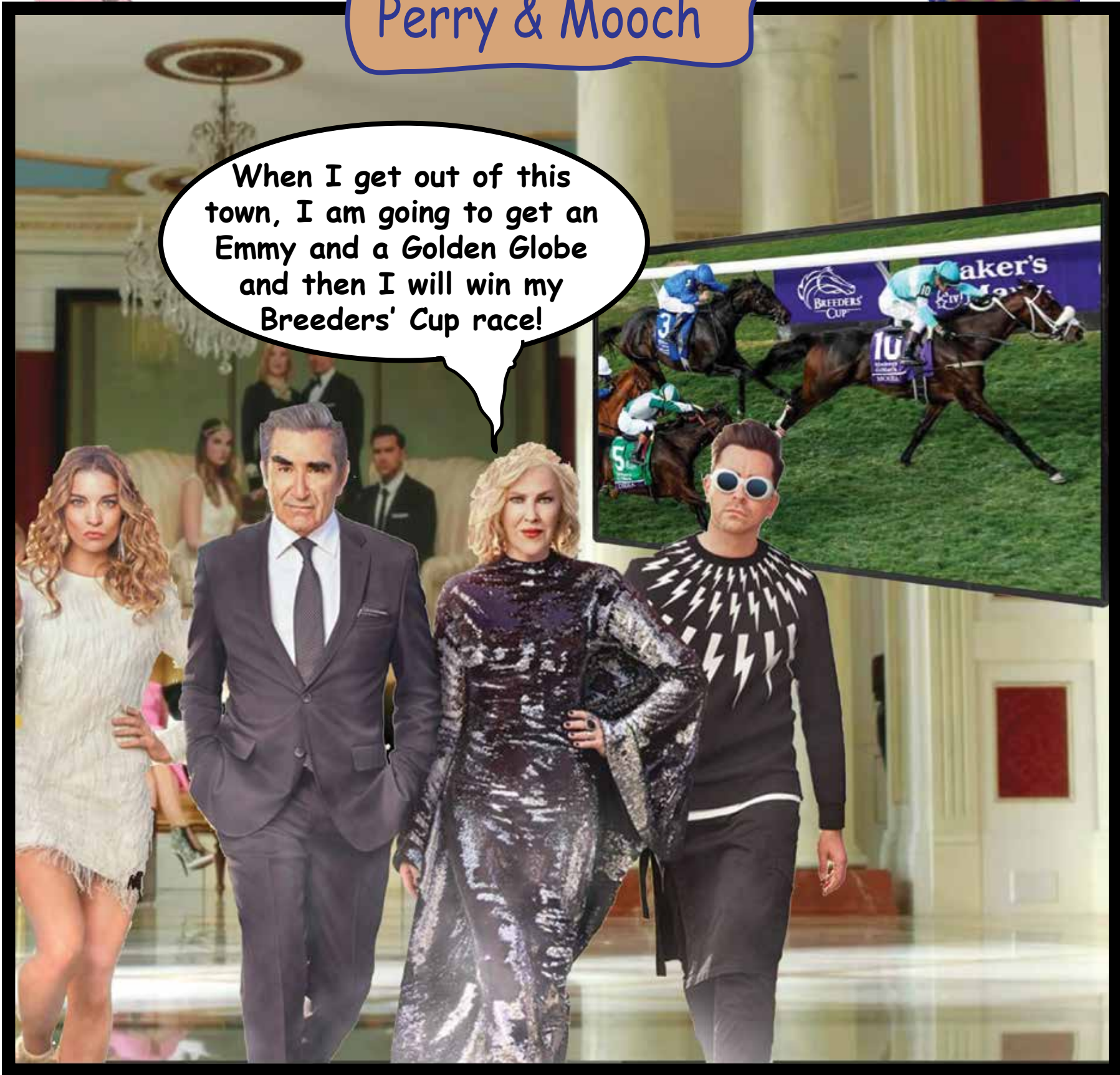


RACETRACK HUMOUR



Perry & Mooch

When I get out of this town, I am going to get an Emmy and a Golden Globe and then I will win my Breeders' Cup race!



Great Finish, Great Story at the Melbourne Cup

The \$5.3 million Melbourne Cup is called the race “that stops a nation”, as virtually all of Australia tunes in, and this year, not only did millions of racing fans get an



Knight's Choice (#11)

extraordinary race with a sensational finish, but they also got a lovely back story on the jockey as well.

Twenty-four horses lined up for the 2-mile event. Knight's Choice, who went off at 109-1, was 16th after the first mile, and as the mob turned for home down the very long Flemington stretch, the field panned out at least 12-wide, and any one of those dozen horses had a chance to win. Late in the stretch, Robbie Dolan, the jockey on Knight's Choice, weaved in and around horses along the inside and, at the wire, somehow got his horse's nose ahead of Warp Speed, who went off at 33-1.

This was the first time that jockey Dolan had ridden in Australia's greatest race, and it was a 2nd Melbourne Cup for trainer Sheila Laxon. In 2001, she became the

first female trainer to win this race when she sent out Ethereal. The bettors had good reason to eliminate Knight's Choice from their wagering. The 5-year-old gelding had won his first race easily, but in 10 subsequent races, had not only failed to win, but he had been beaten by a total of 61 lengths. Those hitting Knight's Choice on the Woodbine betting platform got \$221.70 on the win end, and those who somehow predicted the 11-4 exactor cashed \$5,288.40 for a \$2 bet.

Jockey Dolan had previously gained fame in Australia as a contestant on that country's version of The Voice. Dolan blew away the judges with his powerful vocals, though, apparently, the panel was stunned when they asked him what he did for a living.

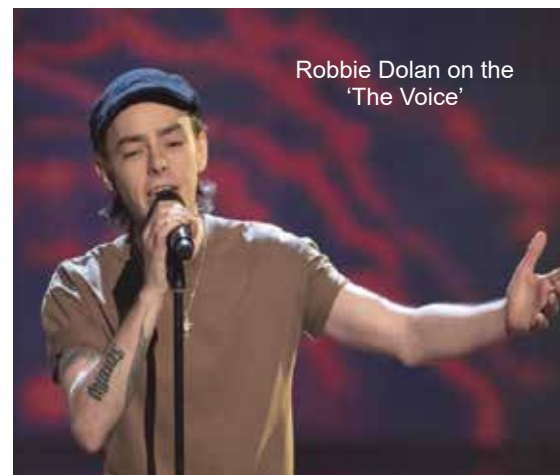


Jockey Robbie Dolan enjoying the Melbourne Cup

“I work as a professional jockey,” he said. “Excuse me?” asked a judge. “I ride horses for a living,” he added. As good as he is as a jockey, Dolan admitted he

had no formal singing training. “When did you know that you could do that?” he was asked. “Oh, last week!” He responded to laughs all around. and, coincidentally, hooked up with trainer Laxon while singing on a Melbourne Cup boat cruise.

“Pinch me. I'm dreaming,” said Dolan. “I can't believe it. I think I'll be singing for the rest of my life after that. What the hell!” Dolan, 28, is the son of Bobby Dolan, who rode horses for Irish horse training legend Dermot



Robbie Dolan on the 'The Voice'

Weld's team that produced two Cup winners in 1993 and 2002. Robbie Dolan on the 'The Voice' Bobby surprised his son by travelling to Australia for his Melbourne Cup debut and was in the crowd to watch his victory.



*The Board of Directors
and staff of the
HBPA of Ontario
wish you and your
family a very
Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year.*



Photo Courtesy:
LongRun Thoroughbred
Retirement Society (Tanglefoot)

How Did Canada Do at the Breeders Crown?

On the October 25-26 weekend at the Meadowlands, there were 12 Breeders Crown races offering over \$7 million in purses.



To the victor goes the spoils. Paige MacDonald laid a big one on her husband after James won the Breeders Crown 2-Year-Old Fillies Trot

Jessica Hallett Photo

Friday: Two-Year-Old Filly Trot – \$700,000:

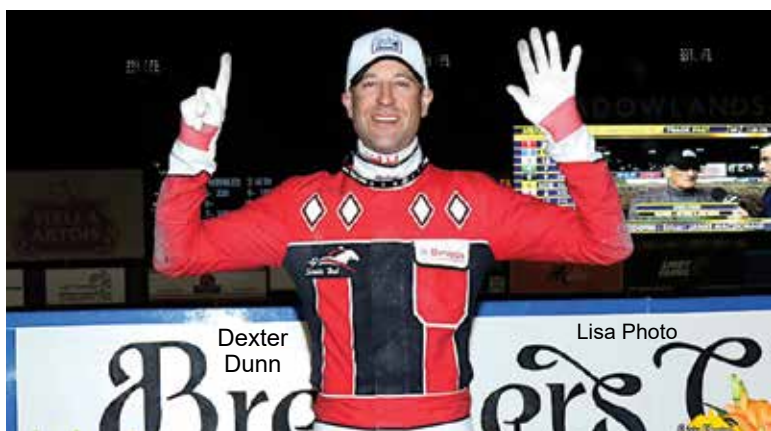


Lady Landia

Lisa Photo

James MacDonald had never previously won a Breeders Crown, but he wasted no time getting this off his bucket list. In the bike behind **Lady Landia**, MacDonald came into the stretch a confident 2nd behind Miss Belmar (Andrew McCarthy). As soon as Lady Landia was taken off the rail, she started eating into the front-runner's lead and got to the finish line almost 2 lengths the best in 1:53.3, her best time in 8 career races. The \$26.60 win price is strange considering that Lady Landia had won her elimination the week before and trainer **Åke Svanstedt** elected to take himself off the drive in favour of MacDonald.

Two-Year-Old Filly Pace – \$700,000:



Dexter Dunn

Lisa Photo

Dexter Dunn launched his epic Breeders Crown experience by delivering **Miki and Minnie** to a decisive 2-length win in 1:50.2. Miki and Minnie started from post 9, but Dunn had her make a bold first over move down the backstretch and the filly continued her good work right to the wire. **Doug McNair** had to extricate **The Last Martini** out of the pocket late and she paced nicely into second. Miki and Minnie paid \$13.60.

Two-Year-Old Colt and Gelding Pace – \$700,000:

Maryland went off at 4-5 for Dexter Dunn and had to hold on bravely in the final strides to repel Maximus Mearas S and Scott Zeron. The time for the mile was 1:51.4. Marcus Melander trains Maryland who won for the 5th time in 8 races and paid \$3.60.

Two-Year-Old Colt and Gelding Trot – \$700,000:

Ronnie Wrenn gunned **Louprint** to the lead from post 9, then allowed Fallout (Tim Tetrick) to assume the lead to the head of the stretch. As Fallout faltered, Louprint trotted a final quarter of :26.2 to win by a neck over Sippinonsearoc (Scott Zeron) in 1:49.1 Trained by **Ron Burke**, Louprint notched his 7th win from 10 starts and paid \$18.

Saturday: Open Mare Trot – \$496,000:

Call Me Goo was the best-named horse over the 2-day extravaganza and **Åke Svanstedt** made sure she was named Breeders Crown champion. Call Me Goo took the lead before the half and just trotted away from her rivals, winning by 3 lengths in 1:50.4. Also trained by Svanstedt, Call Me Goo, a 4-year-old mare, won for the 23rd time in 36 races to break through the \$1 million mark in earnings. The bettors did well too – Call Me Goo paid \$12 to win.

Three-Year-Old Filly Trot – \$600,000:

You can't have a Breeders Crown without a win from **Scott Zeron**, and he gave **Allegiant** a perfect 2-hole trip, erupting from the pocket in mid-stretch to overhaul R Melina (Todd McCarthy) for the 2 ¼ length win in 1:51.1 Allegiant improved to 10 for 25 for trainer **Linda Toscano** and he returned \$6 on the win ticket.



Allegiant

Lisa Photo

Three-Year-Old Filly Pace – \$600,000:

Dexter Dunn was back in the winner's circle after the favourite **My Girl EJ** led all the way to win in 1:49.3. My Girl EJ rang up her 14th win in her 29th race for trainer **Ron Burke** and paid \$4.40.

Three-Year-Old Colt and Gelding Trot – \$600,000:

Andrew McCarthy gave **Sig Sauer** a professionally smart drive, easing into 6th from post 8, then following the cover of Amazing Catch (Dexter Dunn) as the field approached the ¾ mark. In the stretch, Sig Sauer moved to the middle of the track and needed the entire stretch to catch the long-time leader, TCI (David Miller). It was very close, but Sig Sauer got it by a nose in 1:50.4. The trainer is **Noah Daley**, and Sig Sauer paid \$9.20.

Open Pace – \$600,000:

This was the most extraordinary of the 12 Breeders Crown races. **James MacDonald** and **Coach Stefanos** were last of 10 as the field turned for home. Working in their favour was the hot pace of the race – before wilting, Abuckabett Hanover (Dexter Dunn) had paced in 1:21.1 to the ¾ mark. MacDonald had to take Coach Stefanos 4-wide into the stretch, but once open road was available, Coach Stefanos mowed down all 9 in front of him and found the finish line a head better than Seven Colors (Jason Bartlett), who went off at 86-1. The time for the mile was 1:48.3. Coach Stefanos, trained by Erv Miller won for the 18th time in his 47th race and paid \$29.60.



Lisa Photo

Coach Stefanos

Open Trot – \$600,000:

This was **Dexter Dunn's** 4th Breeders Crown win of the weekend as he steered **Winners Bet** to victory, although it was hardly routine as Scott Zeron was rallying Periculum late only to lose by a nose in 1:51. Trained by **Nancy Takter**, Winners Bet won for the 14th time in 31 tries and paid just \$3.

Three-Year-Old Colt and Gelding Pace – \$600,000:

It was **Dexter Dunn** again as **Mirage Hanover** came barreling through the stretch to win by over 2 lengths in 1:48. Mirage Hanover is trained by **Jake Leamon**, and with his 10th win in his 26th race, he paid \$7.40. Nijinsky, the most recent North America Cup winner, burst out late to take 2nd place for Louis-Philippe Roy. Both the winner, Mirage Hanover and Nijinsky were bred in Ontario.

Open Mare Pace – \$400,000:

Dexter Dunn concluded his driving tutorial by scoring with **Twin B Joe Fresh** and Dunn drove the 4-year-old mare exactly how a 1-20 shot should be driven. Twin B Joe Fresh was in front before the half in :54.3, then unleashed a pair of :27.1 quarters that sufficiently discouraged the 9 behind her. Twin B Joe Fresh was timed in 1:49.0. Improving to 29 for 39 for trainer **Chris Ryder**, the mare paid just \$2.10. As for Dunn, his 5 wins from the 12 Breeders Crown races is a record, as is the \$2,000,000 in purses he earned on the weekend.

Breeders' Cup 2024:

Moira's Great Win:

The Breeders' Cup weekend at Del Mar (November 1-2)



Moira

had much less Canadian content than in previous years, but the wonderful mare, Moira made up for that with a fantastic win in the \$2 million Filly and Mare Turf. Under Flavien Prat, Moira was comfortable in mid-pack early in the mile and $\frac{3}{8}$ ths test as her stablemate, Full Count Felicia (Irad Ortiz) did a lot of early work, leading the field until deep stretch. Prat had Moira 3-wide into the stretch and she was clearly the strongest, galloping past a tiring Full Count Felicia and carrying her momentum through the finish line as a late charging Cinderella's Dream (William Buick) could only get within half a length. The race was timed in 2:14.95. Full Count Felicia finished 7th.

This punctuated a dream year for trainer Kevin Attard. He won the King's Plate with Caitlinhergrtness and now has a Breeders' Cup win. This was Moira's last race. The 5-year-old will become a broodmare after winning 7 times in 17 starts and banking \$2,996,017.

\$7 Million Breeders' Cup Classic:



Sierra Leone

This year's version was a great betting race. In the field of 14, Fierceness (John Velazquez) was the 5-2 betting choice, and he looked good entering the stretch with a 1-length lead. But Sierra Leone, under Flavien Prat had a full head of steam and outbattled Fierceness to the wire, winning by an expanding 1 1/2 lengths in the good time of 2:00.78 for the mile and a quarter. Prior to this race, Sierra Leone had spent a lot of the bettors' money by finishing 2nd in the Kentucky Derby, 3rd in the Belmont, 2nd in the Jim Dandy and 3rd in the Travers. That probably explains the win price of \$15.80. Chad Brown trains Sierra Leone who improved to 4 wins from

9 races with earnings of \$6,008,000.

\$1 Million Filly and Mare Sprint:



Soul of an Angel

Nine ladies went 7 furlongs and the pace was hot. Society (Tyler Gaffalione) sped past the half mile in :44.22 but was still very game in the stretch as Soul of an Angel rallied from 9th for Drayden Van Dyke. Soul of an Angel got to the wire a half-length the best in 1:21.59. This was the 5-year-old mare's 6th win in her 41st race for trainer Saffie Joseph and she paid \$41.60.

\$1 Million Turf Sprint:



Starlust

There was another upset in this one as Starlust (Rossa Ryan) was 10th of 11 as the field turned for home but unleashed a powerful kick to gobble up all of those in front of him, finding the wire a neck better than Motorious (Antonio Fresu) in :56.92 for the 5 furlongs on the grass. Starlust won for the 6th time in 18 races for trainer Ralph Beckett and he lit up the tote board for \$69.20, the biggest win price of this year's Breeders' Cup.

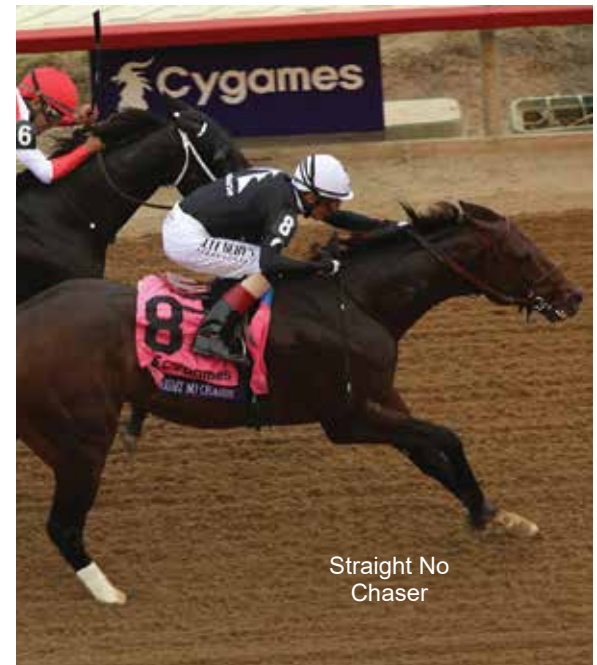
\$2 Million Distaff:



Thorpedo Anna

The terrific Thorpedo Anna entered this 9-furlong race with 7 wins and 2 seconds from her first 9 races and, accordingly, was bet down to 2-5, the shortest odds of all this year's Breeders' Cup races. Thorpedo Anna with Brian Hernandez turned out to be the weekend's surest thing, leading from the start and winning easily by 2 1/2 lengths in 1:49.10. Ken McPeck trains, and Thorpedo Anna paid \$2.80.

\$2 Million Sprint:



Straight No Chaser

This field of 11 produced another sizzling 6 furlongs as John Velazquez gave Straight No Chaser a perfectly timed ride. Straight No Chaser was 3rd for the first half mile as Federal Judge ruled through a :44.12 half. As the field turned for home, Straight No Chaser was grinding to the front and about 50 yards short of the wire, overhauled Bentornato (Luis Saez) to win by half a length in 1:08.62, about a full second off the course record. Straight No Chaser has won 6 of his 10 starts for trainer Dan Blacker and the racing syndicate, MyRacehorse. Those who bet to win got back \$14.20.

\$5 Million Turf:



Rebel's Romance

The distance was a mile and a half, the field was 13 deep, and the 9-5 favourite was the Irish horse, Rebel's Romance. Jockey William Buick always had Rebel's Romance close, stalking the early leader Cabo Spirit (Abel Cedillo) for the first mile. By the time the field turned for home, Cabo Spirit was done, and Rebel's Romance had surged to a 3-length lead. With an impressive final quarter of 23.57, Rebel's Romance was able to repel a very game Rousham Park (Christophe Lemaire) who rallied very late to lose by a neck in 2:26.07, just a quarter second off the track record for the distance. Rebel's Romance is a 6-year-old gelding who added a 15th win in his 22nd race, pushing his career earnings to \$11,777,574. This is the 2nd time this horse has won this race – he did it in 2022 for trainer Charles Appleby and Godolphin. The win ticket was \$5.80.

\$2 Million Mile:



More Than Looks

Patrick Husbands' only ride on the weekend at Del Mar was with Mark Casse's Win for the Money, who had won the \$1,200,000 Woodbine Mile at odds of 13-1 for him 6 weeks earlier. This did not work out as well, as Win for the Money was never involved and finished last of 10. The winner was More Than Looks who pulled off the most remarkable stretch run of the weekend, exploding from last at the top of the stretch to pass all 9 rivals, winning by ¾ of a length for Jose Ortiz in 1:32.65, half a second off the record. Cherie DeVaux sent out this winner for the appropriately named Victory Racing Partners. More Than Looks returned \$15.80.

Friday, November 1: \$1 Million Juvenile Turf Sprint:



Magnum Force

The festivities got off to an upset score when Colin Keane rode Magnum Force to a come-from-behind win over 5 furlongs on the grass. Magnum Force was 8th after the first 3 furlongs, came inside as he entered the stretch, then found room towards the middle of the track late and surged up to win by half a length in :56.36. The trainer is Ger Lyons. The owner is Abdullah Al Khalifa, and the win price was \$27.00.

\$2 Million Juvenile Fillies:



Immersive

Immersive was very alive under Manny Franco. She was comfortable in 5th as Noonni (Flavien Prat) took the field past the half mile marker in a brisk :44.99. As the leaders started to gasp, Immersive immersed herself into the pace, had the lead as they straightened out and was too much for the others, hitting the finish line 4 ½ lengths the best in 1:44.36 for the mile and a 16th. That capped a perfect 4 for 4 year for the filly who is trained by Brad Cox for Godolphin. She paid \$6 to win.

\$2 Million Juvenile Fillies Turf:



Lake Victoria

The Irish-bred Lake Victoria was pounded down to 3-5 and, under Ryan Moore, she justified that support, passing 6 rivals in the final half mile to win by 1 ½ lengths in 1:34.28 for the mile. Aiden O'Brien is the trainer, and the filly is owned by Mrs. John Magnier, Derrick Smith and Michael Tabor. Lake Victoria won all her first 5 races, and all the bettors got was \$3.40.

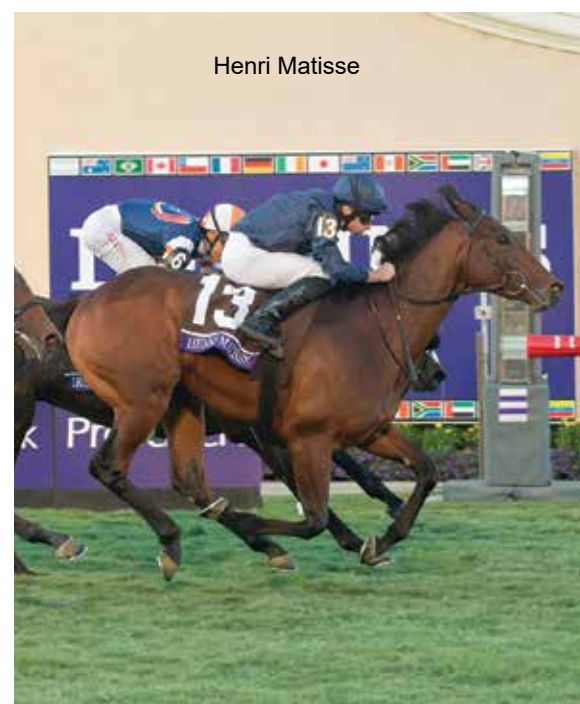
\$2 Million Juvenile Colts and Geldings:



Citizen Bull

Whether you despise him or merely dislike him, you must admit – Bob Baffert can get horses ready for the big ones. Citizen Bull under Martin Garcia went right to the lead, galloped reasonable fractions of :47.89 and 1:12.21 while stablemate, Gaming (Irado Ortiz) ran 2nd all the way around. At the wire, it was Citizen Bull by 1 ½ lengths over Gaming, and only a late spurt from Hill Road (Umberto Rispoli) prevented Getaway Car (Juan Hernandez) from giving Baffert the trifecta. Citizen Bull won for the 3rd time in 4 tries, which makes the \$33.80 win price very attractive.

\$1 Million Juvenile Turf:



Henri Matisse

A dozen rookie colts and geldings went a mile, and this was a great betting race, as the favourite, Henri Matisse went off at almost 4-1 under Ryan Moore. And Henri Matisse painted a gorgeous race, rallying from 11th down the backstretch, brush-stroking past others with a 4-wide move into the stretch and finishing his artwork by getting up in the final stride, winning in 1:34.48 over 29-1 shot, Iron Man Cal (Antonio Fresu). Henri Matisse won for the 4th time in 6 races for trainer Aiden O'Brien. He is owned by Merriebelle Stable, Mrs. John Magnier, Derrick Smith and Michael Tabor and he closed out the first day of the Breeders' Cup by paying \$9.80 to win.

Korina McLean and Moira

Flavien Prat was the jockey as Moira won the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Turf. Rafael Hernandez guided her to the Oaks and Queen's Plate wins in 2022. Justin Stein rode her in her first 2 races, but no one has been on Moira's back more than exercise rider, Korina McLean, who has worked the great mare from the beginning of



her racing career. McLean was at Del Mar, not just to witness Moira's great victory, but to get her perfectly prepped.

"We left on Sunday and laid over at Turfway Park," she says. "She flew to California Monday morning early



and I got there in the afternoon and rode her all week. Unfortunately, her groom, Peter Lopez, was unable to go, but I do have experience grooming. I actually used to groom standardbreds."

As for the incredible experience of watching a horse she exercised win a Breeders' Cup race – "Honestly, I started crying," she says. "My really good friend, Laura Estey was there with us. She was helping with Full Count Felicia. We found a spot on the tarmac to watch the race together. Flavien Prat made the winning move with Moira at the three quarters and when I saw the 1:15 and he had her three wide, I looked at my friend, Laura and I said, 'I think we might actually have a shot here.' And then he asked her to go down the lane and I just remember screaming for her and cheering her on and when she crossed the wire, I was so full of joy and tears and happiness. Looking back on it, it still feels like it was a dream. It's an incredible experience to be able to win the Breeders' Cup. It's unbelievable."

McLean has enormous affection for the connections of Moira that allowed her to be part of the team.

"I've only been galloping for five years, and Kevin Attard gave me my first full-time gallop job at Woodbine," she says. "To be able to get on a horse like her so soon in my galloping career is just out of this world. I'm very grateful. And I definitely have Kevin and Donato Lanni to thank for that because if it wasn't for them, I wouldn't know Moira. I just feel like I was meant to cross paths with her."

For those of us who have never sat on a thoroughbred, is it possible in a workout to tell the difference between a champion horse and a \$12,000 claimer?

"Actually, no," says McLean. "Yeah, she's very special in her own way. She's always been a really nice

horse to ride, but I've gotten on \$5,000 claimers, that are just as classy as her. She's really one of the smartest horses I've ever ridden, that's for sure. She knows when it's race day. It doesn't matter whether it's Eastern time or Pacific time, she knows when it's after 12 o'clock and you're putting a bridle on her that it's race time. I've always really loved her, not because I thought she was a great horse, but just because I've always had a connection with her. I probably would have loved her the same, whether she was a 12 claimer or a Stakes horse."

Two days after Moira's historic win at Del Mar, the 5-year-old mare was sold at auction for \$4.3 million to Australian interests.

"That was very difficult for me," says McLean. "Donato had the idea that he wanted me to send her off in the sales. So, I did walk her into the sales ring before she went on to the auction ring. It was very special. It meant a lot to me to be able to be there with her from the start of her career to the end of her career with us. And yeah, it's probably the hardest thing I've ever done. Hopefully my tears are gone for a little bit now. It still hits me in waves. She's been a very special horse."

Although it may have been assumed that Moira's latest buyers intend to employ her as a broodmare, apparently, they are thinking of extending her race career in Australia.

"I read the article," says McLean. "I was really hoping that she was going to be a mom but it's obviously up to them what they want to do with her."



Worst Spill of the Year

The 1st race at Woodbine on Friday, November 22 was for fillies and mares who could be claimed for \$10,000. The distance was 5 furlongs, and just as the field was approaching the far turn, it went terribly wrong. Whiskey N Ice, ridden by Leo Salles was 3-wide and moving to the lead. Porshas Run (Austin Adams) was along the rail, and No Layups (Edgar Zenteno) was between horses. Suddenly, No Layups took a bad step and went down, ejecting Zenteno. Four trailing horses were involved in a domino-like effect, unable to escape the chaos. Magnetize fell violently as jockey Juan Crawford was thrown about 20 feet in the air before landing hard on the Tapeta. Another Pinky dislodged Da Sean Gaskin and Justin Stein suffered a damaging dismount when Mrs. Benjamin crashed into horses in front of her. In addition, Claramente fell, losing rider Fraser Aebly. Only 3 horses

were able to finish the race. Whiskey N Ice crossed the wire first, with Porshas Run 2nd and Scotty's Love Chil about a dozen lengths back in 3rd. The judges needed a few minutes to determine that Whiskey N Ice had pinched off No Layups and that horse was disqualified and placed last. Porshas Run was promoted to first with Scotty's Love Chil placed 2nd, and since no other horses had finished, no 3rd place payoff was issued.

Fortunately, none of the 5 horses that fell was badly hurt. Each of them was "walked off." Juan Crawford and Fraser Aebly did not require hospitalization. Woodbine posted comments regarding the 3 jockeys that did go to hospital. From early reports, Justin Stein suffered the worst physical damage. His wife, Jennifer Petricca, on Facebook, provided this update:

"Justin sustained three vertebrae fractures in his

lower thoracic, T11, T12, and L1, along with a broken rib. So long as he is able to walk today, he can come home and start the recovery process. Thank you again to everyone for your well wishes. I'm so glad the other riders involved are also able to go home to their families."

Madison Meli, the agent for Edgar Zenteno said,

"Edgar spent the night doing more tests and they revealed a broken left shoulder bone and a bone in his neck. He is resting well and will be in recovery at home soon. Thank you to everyone who continues to reach out to him."

Mike Lym is the agent for Da Sean Gaskin, and he shared that after undergoing tests at the hospital, Da Sean is in great spirits and hopes to be back in action as soon as possible.

Very Bad Day at the Track



Bill Ford,
General Counsel,
Executive VP
WEG

Saturday, November 9 was the worst day of the year for Woodbine Racetrack. In training early in the day, a horse had to be put down. In the second race, Social Dancer, a 3-year-old filly, suffered distress down the backstretch and subsequently died. Jockey David Moran was not injured. The 8th race was the \$164,000 Bessarabian Stakes. With less than half a mile to go, Owen's Tour Guide took a bad step, tossed rider Jose Campos and shortly after, needed to be humanely euthanized. Campos was not hurt. After consultation with the HBPA and the Jockeys' Guild, Woodbine elected to cancel the final 2 races that day and the entire card the following day. **Bill Ford** is General Counsel and Executive Vice-President of Racing. *Down The Stretch* asked and Ford answered.

DTS: Can you summarize what happened Saturday that caused Woodbine to cancel the final two races on that card and all the races on Sunday?

Ford: Saturday was a horrible day here at Woodbine. We got word early, that in training, a horse went down, and we did all the right things to get ready for the race card. In the second race, we saw that a horse went down in a different location, not something that you would ever want to see. And then in the 8th race, when the sun started to go down and it got cold again, another horse went down. Three in a day, all at different locations. We didn't have a good understanding of what was going on, and for the good of the horses and

the participants, we said, "Let's shut it down today. We need to figure out what's happening here." We started to do some work to try and see if we could figure it out. There was nothing really jumping out as an obvious explanation, so we decided to cancel the Sunday card. This allowed time for our consultants from the tapeta footings to come up from Maryland. Joan Dickinson and Miguel came up and worked with our team to try and really figure out what was happening and try and address the issues and get the track back as safe as possible.

DTS: When you were having these discussions on Saturdays, were the jockeys were involved?

Ford: We certainly asked their opinion. You don't make any of these calls in a vacuum. You have to work with the HBPA*, the Jockeys' Guild, Tim Lawson* and Martha Wakely* and having those discussions. Yes, we included them.

DTS: Did the jockeys indicate that they thought something was wrong with the track surface?

Ford: There was not just one opinion coming out of that room. We heard different things. There was a consensus that the track may be firmer than it had been the rest of the season. Maybe it was the drop in temperature that occurred overnight. Some said it was safe, but there was a general consensus that because we weren't certain of what was going on that the more cautious approach to cancel was the better option.

DTS: Did any of you consider that it was just some horrible coincidence that three horses died in a short space of time, and it had nothing to do with the track?

Ford: You consider that, but I'm not going to make a call based on hoping that it's just a horrible coincidence. So, because we were uncertain, we took the safer route.

DTS: David Willmot was the CEO of Woodbine, and he had lost the greatest Izvestia on the track. That probably prompted him to spend a lot of Woodbine money on the Poly track. It was installed in 2006. Is it safe to say in the 18 years since Woodbine put in synthetic, that the rate of horse deaths

on the track has been fundamentally lower than other tracks in North America that use conventional dirt?

Ford: That has been our experience, both on the Poly track and then when we switched over to the Tapeta about 7 years ago. Traditionally, our numbers have been significantly better. We've had a great experience with it. As you know, the length of our meet makes us quite unique. We start in April. We go to December, all without a break. We have cold, we have hot, a lot of rain so we're pretty proud of the safety record to date. But you need to always stay on top of it. No one's resting on their laurels and we want to continue to have one of the safest tracks.

DTS: So, what you're saying is that over the course of a racing season at Woodbine, your track gets beat up pretty good?

Ford: It does. I think the number is 129 days this year. That's a lot. We think we do a great job maintaining it. We know we need to always be investing in doing it better and seeing what is state of the art and we're going to continue to try and stay on top of it.

DTS: after the cancelled races, Woodbine resumed its normal schedule. Can we assume that all parties are confident that the track is safe?

Ford: We have been working very closely with the AGCO*. They asked us to provide a laundry list of items. Myself and other members of management have been on the rail in the mornings during training, getting feedback. I think it's safe to say that the HBPA, the Jockeys' Guild, the AGCO and Woodbine are confident that the track today is in great shape. But we're not going to be naive. We're going to keep an eye on it and make sure it's holding up.

* Tim Lawson is Vice-President of Racing

*Martha Wakely is Senior Manager, Thoroughbred Racing

* The HBPA is the Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association

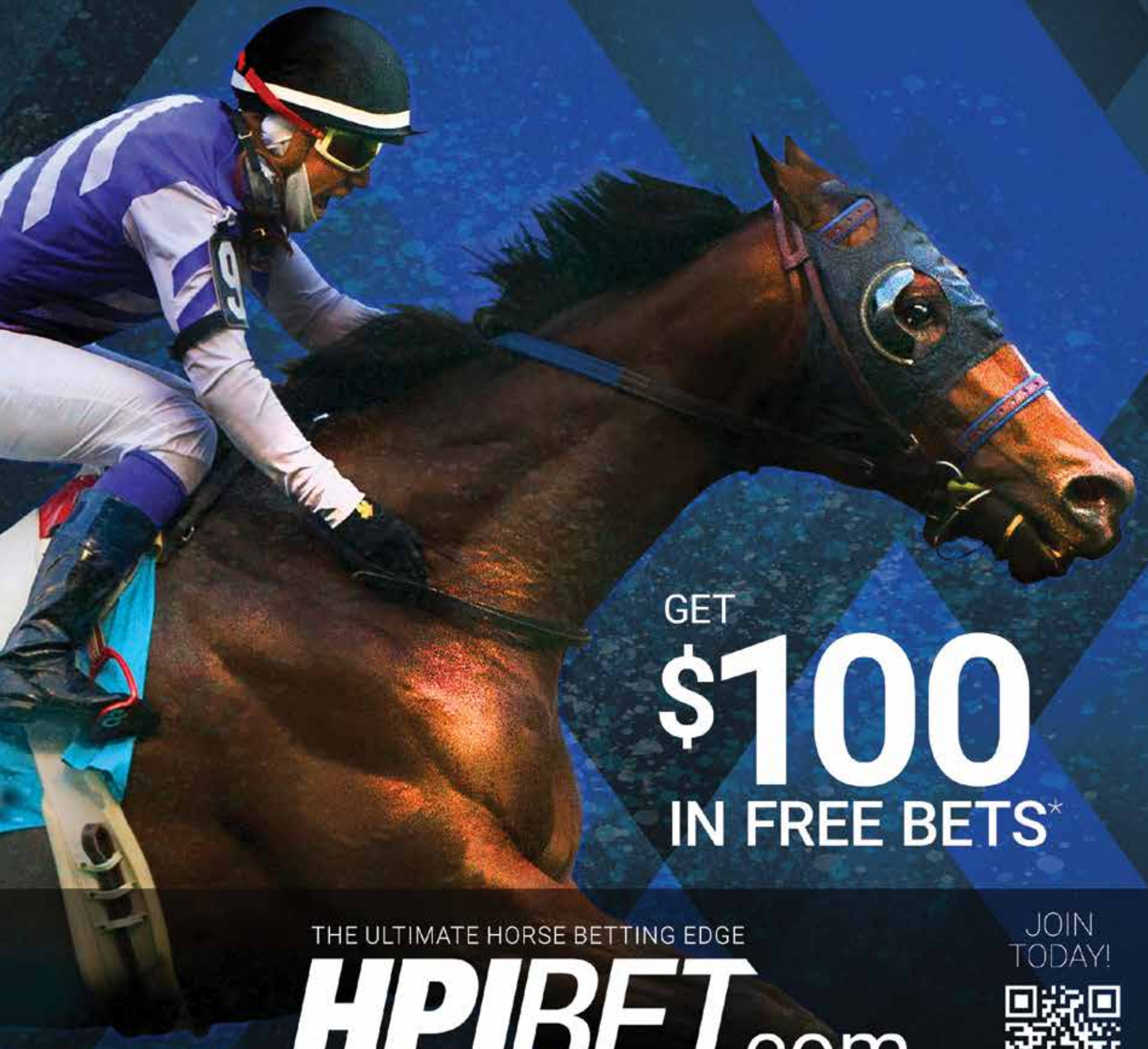
* The AGCO is the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario

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Tour de Fort Completes the Fort's 2024 Tour

by James Culic



There's something about Fort Erie Race Track's traditional end of season race, known locally as the Tour de Fort, that horse people find particularly alluring.

"This one is special, for sure," said Michael Bellissimo after his horse, Nonna's Little Boy, won the two-mile-long endurance battle to close out the 2024 season in Fort Erie on Tuesday evening. After a few lacklustre performances earlier in the year, Bellissimo talked with his trainer, Willy Armata, about what to do with the stubborn horse, who didn't seem to want to sprint in short races.

"The last two races, he really disappointed me. He took the lead after the race was over, when it didn't count," recalled Armata. "So, when Michael said to me, 'What are we gonna do with this horse?' I told him, 'In 11 days we are going in the Tour de Fort', and we took

that shot and it worked."

Carding a marathon race to end the meet has long been a custom at racetracks across North America, but Fort Erie is one of the few to keep the tradition going with its Tour de Fort, which features two full laps around the historic border oval.

"It's a long distance, so we gotta just relax for that first lap," said winning jockey Leo Salles. "After that, the plan was to just avoid the traffic, and we did that and won the race."

Salles picked up a hat trick of wins on closing day, capping off an incredible season for the jockey, who earned the nickname "Longshot Leo" after a stunning win earlier in the year where he rode Gambler's Pose to victory at 102-1 odds. According to Equibase, it was the biggest longshot win of the year for any horse in North America, with a whopping \$207.20 payout on a \$2 wager.

Edgar Zenteno's 3 wins on the last card put a nice punctuation mark on his season – with 39 wins from 197 mounts, Zenteno captured the jockeys' title. Julie Mathis recorded 28 wins to earn honours as the top trainer for the 5th straight year, and it was Bruno Schickedanz proving there is strength in numbers. Schickedanz sent out a meet high 177 runners to produce 27 victories which makes him the leading owner for the 4th straight year.

On the wagering side of things, Fort Erie Race Track closed out the season with \$42.5 million in total wagering, the second highest in Fort Erie Live Racing Consortium history, topped only by the previous year's \$46 million banner season. While off-track wagering dipped slightly, on-track wagering held steady at \$1.93 million.

Fort Erie Race Track will reopen on May 27, 2025, for its 128th season of live thoroughbred racing, and will run through to Oct. 21.

All the usual special events will return, including the Wiener Dog Races, the Corgi & Basset Hound Races, Track-O-Lantern, and the track's signature event, the 90th running of the Prince of Wales Stakes.



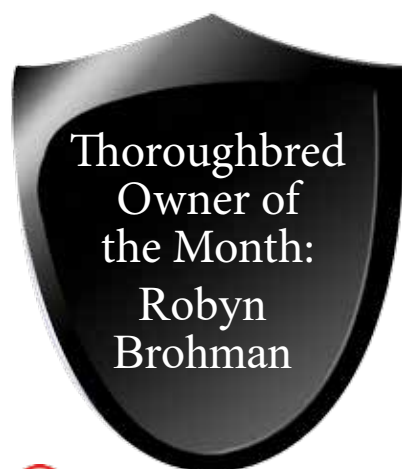
STALLION REGISTRATION **DEADLINE** for the 2025 Breeding Season

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New Stallion	\$200
Renewal (<i>Registered in 2024</i>)	\$100
Late (<i>postmarked after January 15, 2025</i>)	\$500



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It's been another year at Woodbine in which owners who sent their horses to Mark Casse have won the most Stakes. So, it was refreshing when Taquanyah won the Eternal Search Stakes on October 26. Under Leo Salles, Taquanyah watched the pace unfold from 6th halfway through the 7 ½ furlongs on the inner turf, then parlayed a 6-wide stretch move into victory by almost a length, paying \$14.10.

The 6-year-old mare is trained by Saul McHugh and belongs to our Owner of the Month, Robyn Brohman.

"It was probably my best day ever in racing," says Brohman about being at Woodbine to see Taquanyah win. "I'm still new in the business, still learning, but I tend to look at the competition that she's up against. So, I was nervous going into it. Leo put her in a good spot. I was a little bit concerned about the speed at the front of the race, and I started thinking, 'I hope they peter out', which is essentially what happened. Leo brought her to the outside to get around horses and as soon as she started passing them, I started screaming because I knew it was going to be hard to catch her and luckily, the line came in time."

The Eternal Search was worth \$100,000, so the winner's cheque was \$60,000. On July 7, 2023, Taquanyah took down an allowance optional claim event at the same distance. That purse was actually a little better than the Eternal Search – \$112,500, with \$66,600 to the winner.

"The Stakes race is important to us because it puts black type on her," says Brohman. "We are going to retire her. She's had only 22 races. Anybody that knows me, I will always say, 'Let's do what's right by the horse.' She owes us nothing. She's a fantastic little filly. She's retiring 100% sound and we're going to add her to our breeding program."

As for Salles' fine ride in the Eternal Search, it simply reinforced what Brohman felt about the jockey.

"Leo gave Taquanyah a perfect ride," she says. "He's our jockey for her. They make a great team."

Taquanyah enters her retirement with an excellent resumé – 5 wins from those 22 starts and \$234,601 in purses won. *Down The Stretch* wondered about her name.

"Taquanyah is a wildlife conservatory that's two or three miles from my farm," says Brohman, whose farm is in Hagersville, about 45 kilometres south of Hamilton.

It turns out Brohman named several of her horses based on local geography. For example, there is Indiana Road.

"She is named after the road that the farm is on," says Brohman. "I call her a good citizen for her temperament and she's just a nice horse anybody can handle. She's finally figured out what racing is and what it means to be a



Robyn Brohman with Pretty Bird, dam of Taquanyah

racehorse. She did break her maiden at a \$15,000 claiming and then we ran her up a couple weeks ago at a \$25,000 and she certainly did not embarrass herself, finishing second."

McKenzie Road is also a horse, and a map related shoutout. The horse has not hit the board in 5 tries.

"She's another one that's named by for a road that's near the farm," says Brohman. "She's our 3-year-old filly. She's an English Channel and from what I understand, they tend to mature later. We have had a challenge filling races for her. We tried to run her in a 40 optional claimer several times, and they didn't go on the turf for fillies. She was in a maiden special weight, and we knew it was above her class, but she was ready to go, so we took the chance. We hope to have her race again this year."

Then there's Mount Healy – not only a racehorse, but a tiny community about 16 kilometres east of Hagersville. Mount Healy's only race was totally forgettable. Under Larry Munoz, he finished last of 8 in a \$7,500 maiden claim race at a mile and a 16th on October 4.

"Mount Healy is another home bred," says Brohman. "He's a 4-year-old and he is a ginormous horse, almost 18 hands high. He is very much a farm favourite, but he's a bit of a goof. In that race, I think he got kind of lost coming into the home stretch. So hopefully when he runs again, he'll be in between horses and not cut out on his own."

Brohman tells *Down The Stretch* it was always in the cards to be involved in this sport.

"Horses have always been my passion since I was a little kid," she says. "I was never allowed to have them or ride them because my grandmother, Gladys Mehlenbacher, grew up in the standardbred industry, and she believed that horses were evil. When I was done school and could afford horses, I started riding. My father, Ron Daghish and I had always said we would like to own a thoroughbred together. He used to work for Hewitt's Dairy. I grew up knowing the Hewitt family. When my dad passed away in 2015,

Maureen Hewitt-Topp came to me and said, 'Would you be interested in going to the sale to take your mind off your dad?' And Maureen and I bought our first thoroughbred together."

Brohman has been able to afford the cost of owning thoroughbreds thanks to a successful career with a paint manufacturer, but she makes a point of extending gratitude to everyone who has contributed to her passion.

"I have great support around me that has afforded me to live my dream," she says. "My parents have always supported me, and it is my late father's farm that I have transitioned one paddock at a time. My husband who, despite never growing up with animals, helps and supports me when needed. There's Saul McHugh, my trainer with a lifetime of horse experience, who was once a successful jump jockey. He is a wizard with young or challenging horses. Maureen Hewitt-Topp has been a great supporter and friend during this adventure. Cassandra Franse, my close friend takes impeccable care of our mares in Kentucky. Then there's the fantastic jockeys we work with at Woodbine and our team members that help care for the horses daily at the track and farm."

And what is the aspect of thoroughbred racing that Brohman likes the best?

"Probably the thrill of competition," she says. "There is nothing like the feeling I experienced during the Eternal Search. I want to see my horses work. I don't care about fast times because, to me, fast times in training don't necessarily transition during a race. I love the breeding. I love the foaling side of it, and I love the babies growing up."

Brohman occasionally rides her horses, though she admits she didn't start riding until she was older. She does have plans to get on her Stakes winner, though.

"My intent is when Taquanyah comes home and has some downtime, I hope to take her out on a couple of rides once she settles."



Since 2008, *Down The Stretch* has carved out over 300 Owner of the Month features, but our Standardbred owner for this issue, Ozzie MacKay gets the trophy for the earliest lifetime horse racing anecdote.

"I was born in the U.S. and grew up in Truro, Nova Scotia" says MacKay. "Standardbred racing has always been in my family's blood. There's a picture of me in my mother's arms in the winner's circle with a horse that Dad was driving. My Mom says I was only a week old. Dad was stabled in New Hampshire at the time, so the first place I went to, right out of the hospital, was to a racetrack." Dad was stabled in New Hampshire at the time, so the first place I went to, right out of the hospital, was to a racetrack.

MacKay also tells us that he was very young when he first owned a horse – well, sort of.

"I remember that I actually owned a horse by the name of Ozzie's Boy," he says. "Whether I actually owned the horse or Dad just said I did, I'm not sure. I might have been 10 years old, and he was racing at Sackville Downs at the time, and he won that night. Dad got offered some money that he couldn't refuse. When I found out that the horse wasn't going home with us, I started kicking and screaming and yelling in the paddock. Dad took me outside, sat me on a bench and said, 'That hot dog that you had tonight – did you enjoy it? If you want to keep eating hot dogs, we're going to have let this fella go. Sometimes this is just how things work.' And after that, I realized racing horses is a business."

(Tell us that doesn't remind you of the scene in the movie *Dreamer*, where Dakota Fanning has a tantrum after her beloved horse is claimed.)

At 54, MacKay has seen many horses come and go, but he tells us the last seven years, thanks to his relationship with trainer Blake MacIntosh, have been a fun ride.

We were attracted to MacKay because of his 2-year-old pacer, Sterling Choice.

"Blake and I drove to Harrisburg last year, and when we walked into Winbak's consignment, I see this gorgeous grey horse being shown. 'I loved him,'" says MacKay. After looking at him numerous times, I said to Blake, 'Let's take a run at that grey fella.'"

MacKay and MacIntosh purchased the grey for \$15,000, with MacKay's sister Tammy Lynn and Gilles Landry coming in as partners a little later. In Sterling Choice's first year of racing, he won twice in 11 tries and banked \$282,892.

"That was a great investment," laughs MacKay. "If one can do that with every horse you buy at the yearling sales,



you'd be pretty darn happy."

Sterling Choice has already provided his owners with multiple thrills. In his racing debut, he started out in the \$50,760 Tompkins-Geers Stakes at Mohawk. He went off at 36-1 and finished 6th. Then, he was 2nd in a \$95,000 OSS gold leg. In his 5th lifetime race, Sterling Choice tugged Tyler Borth to a 2nd place finish in the Battle of Waterloo (purse of \$245,400) at Grand River Raceway in 1:51.2. The horse was still a maiden in his 8th race but went off at even money in the Champlain Stakes for a purse of \$81,642. James MacDonald took the grey to the lead, and though he was passed at the head of the stretch, he came back to win by half a length in 1:52.1. The script repeated itself just four weeks later in a \$95,000 OSS Gold with Louis-Philippe Roy driving. Sterling Choice gave up the lead late, then rallied back again for the win. This was more than enough to convince MacKay that Sterling Choice was something special.

"Not often is a 2-year-old collared at the head of the lane and comes back on and wins," says MacKay. "

As good as Sterling Choice has been, his chart lines show that he has had 7 different drivers out of his first 11 races. MacKay does his best Rodney Dangerfield, suggesting his horse is not always a driver's first choice.

"I just don't think he gets the respect he deserves," says MacKay, "from the handicappers that bet their money to the drivers that switched off him, but that is part of the game."

MacKay gives his dad, Emmons credit for Sterling Choice's good work.

"Dad broke the horse in Truro," says MacKay. "Dad trained Sterling Choice and another horse by the name of Groovin Will that I had bought at Goshen, and he broke a track record for 2-year-olds at Monticello, clocked in :54, which was exciting, especially since I own him all by myself."

That the MacKay family is up to its eyebrows in standardbred racing is fundamental here. MacKay's sister, Tammy Lynn is a driver who has competed in several Ladies' Driving Championships and represented Canada in 2011 in an International Women's Driving Challenge in Norway.

Emmons MacKay has a driving record that dates back to the early 70s. In July, at the age of 79, at Truro, he recorded a win with Johnnywalkerdelux, an 8-year-old pacer trained by Tammy Lynn. That might have been an historic accomplishment.

"The boys in PEI told me that he's one of a few drivers to win a race in 7 straight decades," says MacKay proudly. "Dad started driving when he was 16."

There are a few other horses MacKay has a soft spot for.

"We gave \$17,000 in Lexington for Go Ahead Makemyday, a 2-year-old Walner colt," says MacKay. "He ended up doing very well for us."

Go Ahead Makemyday won 3 of his first 8 races and earned \$150,065. His biggest payday was in the \$337,838 New Jersey Classic at the Meadowlands where he finished second. He was then entered into the Mohawk Million, and although he finished out of the money, MacKay never dreamt that he would be involved in an ownership group with a horse racing for a million dollars.

"That was a wicked experience," he says.

MacKay also owned a piece of a Somebeachsomewhere colt named Somewhereinverona.

"He was also a grey," he says. "He was a really nice horse for us."

Somewhereinverona had a mark of 1:49.4 and earned north of \$150,000 for the MacKay and MacIntosh connections.

MacKay likes to emphasize the rock-solid relationship he has with Blake MacIntosh, who is having a career year with over three million in purse earnings. MacKay feels that his good friend and trainer deserves to be nominated for an O'Brien Award in 2024.

"When I first got involved with Blake about 7 years ago, we had two fillies that made their first starts in the NYSS stakes races at Vernon Downs," recalls MacKay. "Their names were Twin B Peaches and Ubettergo Go, and both ended up winning that night. Those were my first wins with Blake."

What MacKay likes in MacIntosh is that he's a lot like him – he is very competitive, and they are both Leaf fans.

"You always know where you stand with Blake," states MacKay. "There is no grey. It's either black or white. If one of the horses is not quite fitting into the program, we move them along – something that I really appreciate in a trainer."

If horse racing is all about money management, MacKay is your guy.

MacKay has been managing clients' assets for over 35 years in the financial services industry. His company, Achieve Financial is licenced to do business in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, and Alberta.

MacKay was asked what really matters to him in standardbred racing.

"I love it all. It's a passion for me. I especially love watching the yearling train down and develop. The dreaming of having a good one and winning races keeps me wanting more."



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Had to Be Ivory Sets Record on Ajax Downs Closing Day With a “Demolishing Win”

October 31, 2024 by Jennifer Morrison

What a way to end the racing season. In a brilliant display of speed, champion Had to Be Ivory set a track



record for 110 yards at Ajax Downs on October 30, the closing day of the 2024 Quarter Horse season. The powerful 9-year-old gelding exploded from the gate from the rail post and was 1 ½ lengths in front of his rivals

at the finish in a sizzling 6.761, beating Carneros' five-year record of 6.770. The world record of 6.660 was set in Mexico City in 2022 by Divas First Anita who posted a 116 speed index.

Incredibly, Had to Be Ivory, ridden by Josh Scott, earned a career-best 113 speed index in his fourth win this year and 29th win in 39 career races. “A demolishing win” is how track announcer Frank Ferrari described the race.

“I was shocked,” said Bryn Robertson, who trains the homebred gelding for his wife, Carol and daughter-in-law, Jaime. “I thought he had a good shot because he’s a great breaker. But he really jumped out there and was gone.”

Had to Be Ivory turned the tables on James Bogar’s Queen Charlotte, who defeated the gelding in the Alex Picov Championship but was fourth on Wednesday in her first try at the 110-yard distance.

Robertson said Had to Be Ivory, who will winter at the family’s Hillerin Farm in Hillsburgh, could return to

racing in 2025. “We might bring him out for a run in the spring and see how he does.”

James Bogar led all owners and breeders through the 25-day Ajax Downs meeting by wins and Quarter Racing Owners of Ontario (QROOI) points. Bogar won 25 races, putting him second in the trainers’ standings to perennial leader Jason Pascoe, who won 27 races to take the title.

Jockey Brian Bell won his second straight High Point Rider title and finished the season with 18 wins. Diego Benitez rode the most winners with 23 victories. The season’s Horse of the Year will be decided by the QROOI board of directors.

Ajax Downs and the QROOI will honour its champion horses and humans on March 8 at the annual Awards Banquet at the Ajax Convention Centre. Ajax Downs’ expansive simulcast room remains open throughout the winter offering telecasts from dozens of tracks throughout the world.




From the
DOWN THE STRETCH
Gang

ODDITIES & ENTITIES



This is a Clive Cohen photograph of the prestigious Turkey Stakes at Ajax Downs on October 13. In a furious fur flying finish, the winning triactor was **Had To Be Gravy, Chicks Dig My Drumstick and Snow Goose.**

Mary Jane Sibbitt posted this on Facebook. - it's from the December 1986 TV Guide that accompanied the Toronto Star



STAR Sports

By PETER GROSS

... While visions of win tickets danced in Pete's head

Twas the night before Christmas and at Greenwood Park
 Not a pony was racing; the wickets were dark
 For the Jockey Club closes this time every year
 And the punters have no thrilling stretch drives to cheer.
 So I stood all alone at the head of the stretch
 In my mind I recalled a year full of bets
 I had flashes of luck and a few brilliant picks
 But most of my choices ran fourth, fifth, or sixth.

As I gazed down the stretch to the finishing line
 I perceived an old gent, so resplendent and fine.
 Now I know, at a furlong, the eyes can play tricks
 But there could be no doubt — that man was St. Nick.

So I raced to his side in a Fozzie Bear sprint
 And I saw in his eyes a most curious glint.
 Though the night air was frigid, his presence was warm
 In his hands were a pencil, a program and form.

So I said to him, "Sir, surely everyone knows
 That the horses are resting, and the jocks' room is closed?"
 And he grinned at me gently, so fatherly kind
 And said, "At this time, my friend, they all race in my mind!"

And he gestured with confidence out to the track.
 When I saw what was there I was taken aback.

All of the horses of racing's great past
 Were in the last furlong, galloping fast.

"On Dancer, on Norcliffe, on Kennedy Road."
 Secretariat, John Henry with speed to explode.
 And though the announcer was different in voice
 The surprising Plate winner was still Golden Choice.

And the Harness display would set most minds on fire
 Cami Fella and Amity Chef at the wire.
 And an Oldtimer's pace, just to sweeten the sauce
 Most Happy Fella parking out Albatross.

For the Rothman's big race, International on grass,
 St. Nick wore a top hat (hey, this guy has class).
 When the favorite was beat by longshot Southjet
 Santa Claus searched his pockets to see what he'd bet.

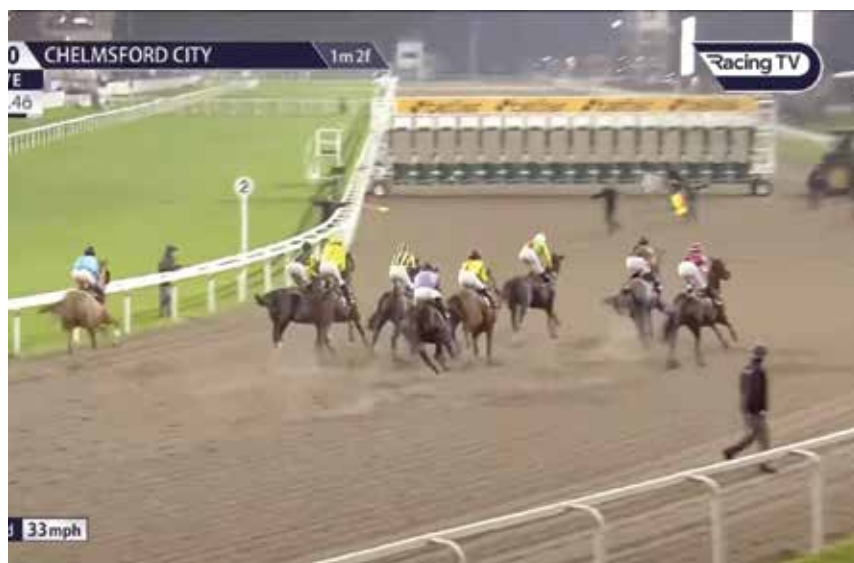
(As was typical with me, my selections would tarry
 I'd bet all to win on the favorite, Shardari.)
 But St. Nick found his ticket, which caused him to grin,
 "Well, what do you know . . . I had fifty to win!"

Then he jumped in his sleigh, and his reindeer, all eight
 Trotted off into space, each one perfect in gait.
 And I swore I could hear, as he took off in flight,
 "Sunday racing to all . . . and to all a Good Night!"



The beauty of this picture is that the 3 MacDonald brothers, James, Mark and Anthony made Meadowlands history on October 18 when all 3 of them steered horses in the same Breeders Crown elimination heat. The less than beautiful reality is that none of them hit the board. The race for 2-year-old colts and geldings was won by Emoticon Legacy, driven by Louis Philippe Roy. James came last with Karinchak, Mark was 7th with Civilian Drone and whatever family bragging rights were available, Anthony finished 4th with Memento Mori.

On November 9 at Chelmsford City Race Course north-east of London, 9 horses were contesting a mile and a quarter race on the synthetic track. As the field turned for the home stretch, a man on the track was frantically waving a yellow flag, urging the jockeys to stop race riding. Apparently, the tractor which is used to pull the starting gate away, could not be started and at full tilt, the riders and horses were heading straight to the stalls. Thankfully, all the jockeys were able to pull their horses up in time to prevent any catastrophic collision. No humans or animals were hurt and the race was declared a non-contest.



DOWN THE STRETCH PODCAST

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

Episode 246, October 14:

A horse racing podcast should have horse races and this one does! We have all 8 OSS Gold Super Finals from Mohawk Saturday night. We have **Sahin Civaci** winning 5 times at Woodbine and **Fraser Aebly** sweeping both Stakes races on Saturday. Driver **Doug McNair** had a 6-win night at Mohawk Friday and we tell you why former jockey, **Francine Villeneuve** had maybe her best day of the year at Woodbine. Have you ever watched **Unfiltered**, the horse racing doc produced by Ontario Racing Management? We sample several minutes of the latest episode that looks at the rivalry between trainers **Mark Casse** and **Kevin Attard**. We have all 7 races from the Wednesday card at Ajax Downs, and 15-year-old **Alexandra Homorcean** scored 1st place in the Bill Galvin Alliance Youth Literary Derby and she thrills us with a rendition of her award-winning harness racing poem.

Episode 247, October 21:

This podcast covers all 3 genres of horse racing in Ontario and beyond. We have the Ontario Derby Stakes from Woodbine and a nice chat with veteran jockey **Eswan Flores** who recently scored his first Stakes win of the year. It was Breeders Crown elimination weekend at the Meadowlands and we tell you how Canadians did and how a couple horses blew up the tote board. At Western Fair last week, **Sugar Doyle**, **Ghislain Paquet**, **Melissa Keith** and even...**James MacDonald** called races. You can decide who did it best...and worst. How much legal trouble did **Jody Jamieson** get into? The law firm of Hopple, Hopple, Hopple and Fetlock represents the trotter **Paquet** who was hurt by Jamieson's post-race comments. The quarter horse season at Ajax Downs is nearing its finish line. Did **Diego Benitez** wrap up the jockeys' title by winning 3 times on the 3rd last card? And a bizarre finish at Keeneland as the jockey on a 13-1 shot thought the race finished at the 16th pole. It didn't and a lot of pick-5 bettors were badly burned.

Episode 248, October 28:

This week we have a complete breakdown of Canadian interests at the Breeders Crown., featuring **James MacDonald** and **Scott Zeron** at the Meadowlands and from Woodbine, a first for **Leo Salles**, **Saul McHugh** and **Robyn Brohman**. The Tour de Fort ended the racing season at Fort Erie and many of the horses wanted out much earlier. Is **Fraser Aebly** a likely candidate for apprentice jockey of the year? He says he's not thinking of it, but we are. Driver **Doug McNair** tells us that his November appearance at an international race in Paris next month will be a return to the scene of the crime. We had 5-win nights last week for both **Travis** and **Trevor Henry** and **Rik Chapman** called in from Australia voicing a stunning and unlikely win in the Cox Plate.

Episode 249, November 3:

Of course, we lead this week with **Moira's** great win in the Breeders' Cup Fillies and Mares Turf. Comments from Donato Lanni and **Kevin Attard**. **Rik Chapman** called in from Sydney, Australia on the Golden Eagle Stakes and the Melbourne Cup. Trainer **Angus Buntain** talks about 8 great days in his career. We have an amazing result for an Ontario-bred pacer named **Southwind Amazon**, a 14-year-old who has now won 137 times. Did you see that **Count Dracula** won at Churchill Downs on Halloween? From the final day of racing at Ajax Downs, we give props to **Cassandra Jeschke**, **Rachel Isaacs**, **Brian Bell**, **Diego Benitez**, **Jason Pascoe** and **James Bogar**. And visa vis the Presidential race in the U.S., we tell you why a horse race is better than an election.

Episode 250, November 11:

A dreadful day at Woodbine – 2 horses died and a Stakes race was cancelled. **Kevin Attard** talks about **Moira**, her win in the Breeders Cup, his stretch run exuberance, and the emotion of selling her 2 days later. Also, **Korina McLean**, the woman who has ridden Moira more than any jockey - she was also at Del Mar to witness the great mare's spectacular win. There was a monster upset in the \$10 million Melbourne Cup in Australia, and a great back story for the winning jockey **Robbie Dolan**, who dazzled tv viewers on the Australian version of The Voice. The Ontario-bred pacer, **Southwind Amazon** is now the winningest standardbred of all time. This episode has **Tony Randall** and **Jack Klugman** from a classic horse racing episode of **The Odd Couple** and continuing a sitcom theme – **Lucille Ball** winning at Aqueduct.

Episode 251, November 18:

Saturday was an amazing day at Woodbine. The longest shot, **Wicked Django** won the Autumn Stakes at 24-1. A horse called **Nobals** won the Kennedy Road Stakes and needed huge cajones to get past **Patches O'Houlihan**. Earlier in the card, **Sahin Civaci** won 3 races as he has virtually clinched the riders' title at Woodbine. The 12th race was a mandatory Super Hi-5 payout. The winner was 79-1, and when no one correctly bet the first 5 horses, the payout for 4 was spectacular. **Emma-Jayne Wilson** joins us on the phone to talk about the terrible accident she sustained in October. Wilson, 43, vows she will ride again. Woodbine's **Bill Ford** explains the abundance of caution that the track employed, cancelling races after 3 horses died on November 9. At Chelmsford Race Course in England, how close did jockeys and horses come to catastrophe when the starting gate could not be moved off the track? And 71-year-old **Keith Ballard**, Australia's oldest jockey, wrote a Hollywood ending to his 55-year career.

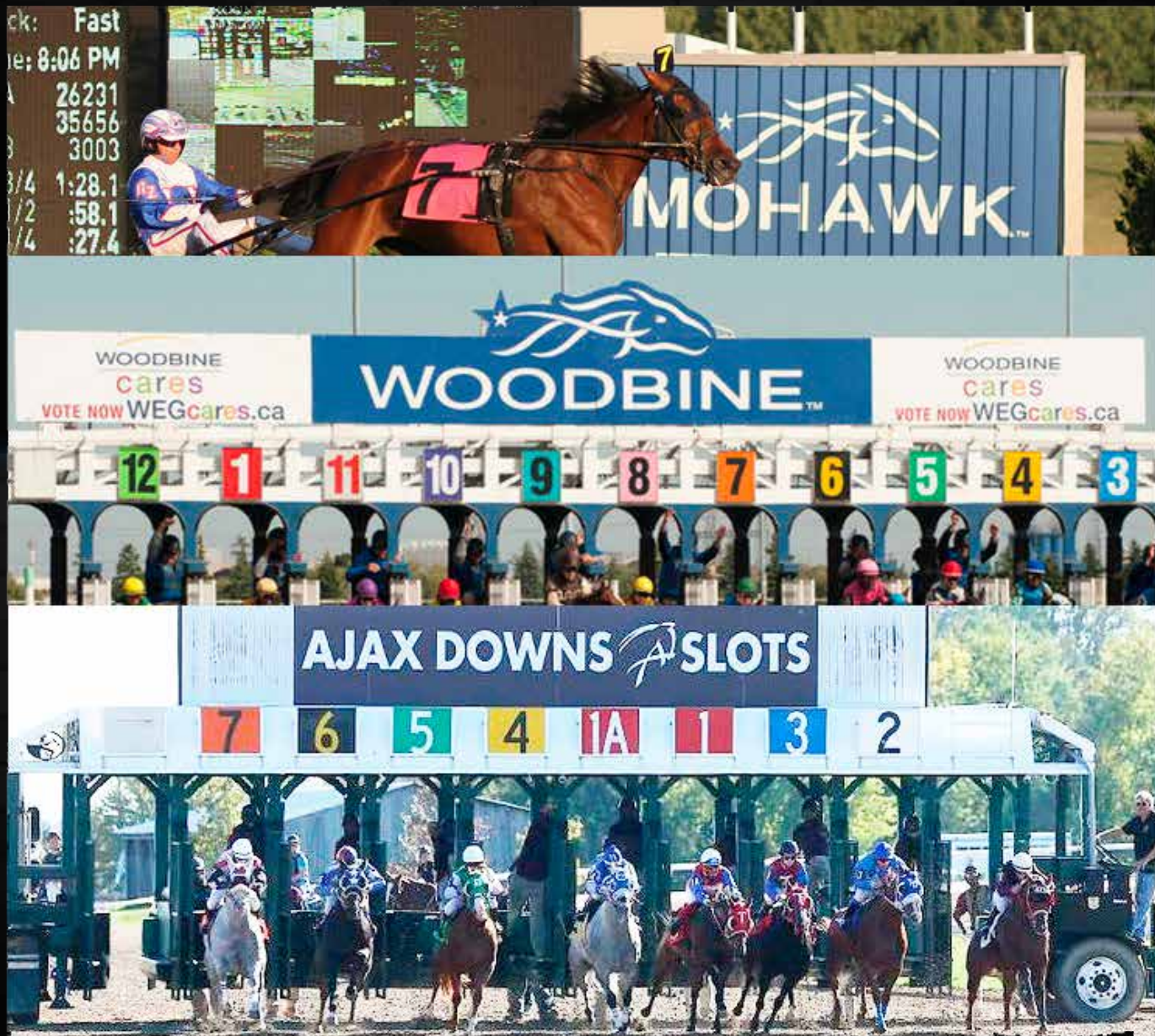
Episode 252, November 25:

We take the good with the bad this week – 5 horses down and 3 jockeys to the hospital after the first race Thursday at Woodbine. The good refers to **Sahin Civaci**, who won the Shady Well Stakes on Saturday and it was one of his 6 wins on the card. Another jockey, **Austin Adams** has been piling up the wins and taking advantage of being the go-to apprentice. Driver **Mark MacDonald** talks to us about the challenge of leaving the New York circuit and coming to Mohawk where he just might funnel some wins away from his brother James.

Have you ever seen a horse pay over \$400 to place? It happened at the Meadows and we'll tell you why. And those of us who feel strongly about racial equality had to be cheering when **Rosa Parks** took the lead at Del Mar and refused to give it up.

ON AIR

DOWN THE STRETCH



A Podcast with Peter Gross