

DOWN THE STRETCH

CANADA'S MOST INFORMATIVE AND ENTERTAINING HORSE RACING NEWSPAPER

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Photo by Dave Landry



THE EDITOR WEIGHS IN



There is a theme that *Down the Stretch* has touched on over the years and with the thoroughbred racing season about to restart, it's a good time to revisit it. It's women. No other professional sport features their success at all levels like we see in horse racing – for both thoroughbred and standardbred.

To its credit, the NBA has some lady referees, but it remains unlikely that any female will play in a regular season game. The NHL once had Manon Rhéaume playing in goal for the Tampa Bay Lightning, but her appearance was restricted to one period of an exhibition game. We've seen examples of female place kickers in U.S. college football, but it would be extraordinary news if an actual NFL game featured a woman trying to split the uprights. And even if a woman developed an unhittable knuckler, FanDuel could not establish odds high enough that she would pitch in a major league game.

But in horse racing, woman ride, women drive, train, own, officiate and even call the races. When you talk about ladies in horse racing, you have to start with Emma-Jayne Wilson. Over a 20-year career, Wilson has won 1,875 races, including the 2007 Queen's Plate aboard Mike Fox.

She also gives terrific interviews. Woodbine has long been a great place for lady jockeys to prosper. Last year alone, we had winning rides from Wilson, Sofia Vives, Skye Chernetz, Amanda Vandermeersch, Rachel Slevinsky and Isabelle Wenc. For many years, it has been proven that a woman can train a horse just as well as a man. Josie Carroll, now in her 31st season preparing horses, is zeroing in on her 1,000th win. Three of those came in the Queen's Plate (Edenwold in 2006, and Inglorious in 2011), and Mighty Heart (2020). Barb Minshall, training at Woodbine since 1995, has 430 wins. Julia Carey has been sending out horses since the late '90s and has 205 wins on her record. Catherine Day Phillips is entering her 25th year with 344 victories. Katerina Vasilieva's 2023 was her best season, and she starts 2024 with 102 visits to the winner's circle. This issue of *Down The Stretch* has a lovely story (page 14) from Woodbine's Chris Lomon on trainer Michelle Love, who seems perched to soar up the standings in 2024.

The harness side has not been quite as generous to lady athletes. For reasons we cannot completely grasp, it's much harder to be a female driver at Mohawk than

a lady jockey at Woodbine. On Page 4, we report on the International Women's Day race at Mohawk, won by Julie Walker with a steer on her trotter as good as anything James MacDonald or Doug McNair have ever executed. The standardbred side has a long way to go before it acknowledges that women can be just as good as men on the track, but meanwhile, female trainers prosper in the sport. We can cite Casie Coleman, Jodie Cullen, Julie Walker, Cindy Horner, Shannon Henry, Gabriella Sasso, Cassidy Schneider, Chantal Mitchell, and Ashleigh Hensley among the army of women developing winning horses. And don't get us going on American trainers like Linda Toscano and Nancy Takter, who between them have a slew of Breeders Crown, North America Cup, and Meadowlands Pace victories.

There are maybe 200 race calling jobs in North America and it has been exclusively male for too long a time. Jessica Paquette describes the runners at Parx and just recently, Melissa Keith was hired full-time to call the standardbreds at Rideau Carleton. We talk with her on page 15.

Jessica Hallett does not drive harness horses, but within a very short time, she has stamped her name as a big player in the sport. At the recent Dan Patch awards, she was called to the podium 4 times to accept honours. She won the Breakthrough Trophy as well as the Unsung Hero Award. She also scored for best photography and accepted an award for being the most persuasive voice for horses that perished in the Tioga barn fire. We love her for her images, and, on page 22, we feature four of her stunning visual expressions.

And let's not shortchange the men. Testosterone does have a place in horse racing. We've got Kentucky Derby Preps (page 10), all featuring winning colts and male jockeys. Our Canada Out of Town report covers 2 pages (12-13) and gives props to Steven Chircop, Marty Drexler, Bruno Schickedanz, Kevin Attard, Al and Bill Ulwelling and Bill Tharrenos, all of whom should not be penalized for their gender.

Our Thoroughbred Owner of the Month may be an American, but Elliott Logan has many reasons to pump up Canadian horse racing. Gerard Demers is our Standardbred Owner of the month. In fact, he can thank Julie Walker for that because he owns the horse, Prince Of Sussex that won the International Women's Day race.

This issue also includes the draw for the Mohawk Million (page 5), a horse named Paquet (page 16) who won his first time out after his owner (also named Paquet) died, and a horse named Suitcase Smith (page 18) named after notorious NHL goalie Gary Smith.

And, keeping with this theme of women in horse racing, Susan Nash is this paper's proofreader and associate editor. Thanks to her, names are spelled correctly, typos are corrected, commas appear where commas should be, and names are capitalized when appropriate – just another example of horse racing being better because of a woman.

STAFF

PUBLISHERS: Anthony and Milagros Kalloo

EDITOR: Peter Gross

ART DIRECTOR: Gord Steventon

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Susan Nash

CONTRIBUTING WRITER: Chris Lomon

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Mail:

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

Phone: 416-873-5250 pgross@rogers.com

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Walker and Trotter Win at Mohawk



Julie Walker winning with Prince of Sussex

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Zacharie Lemay and his trainer, Gerard Demers. It was the horse's 72nd race and his 23rd win. He paid \$6.20.

"I was wanting the front end," said Walker about her strategy. "But Meadowbranch Noble was the best horse in the race to me, so I was quite happy sitting in the 2-hole. Prince Of Sussex was down in class, so that



Prince of Sussex and Julie Walker

NewImage Media Photos

Ten lady drivers competed in the International Women's Day Race at Mohawk on March 8. It was the 3rd race that night – a trot with a purse of \$14,000. Meadowbranch Noble, steered by Jessie Turenne went off as the 8-5 favourite, and through three quarters appeared on the way to victory. But as the field turned for home, Meadowbranch Noble erupted into a gallop and Turenne was forced to take him out of danger to the middle of the track. The beneficiary of this was Prince Of Sussex, driven patiently by Julie Walker. She and her trotter had tracked the leader from the inside for most of the race and when the front-runner blew up, Walker skillfully guided Prince Of Sussex up the inside and the 5-year-old gelding found open road to the finish line, winning by over 3 lengths in 1:55.4, the fastest mile of his career. Walker was able to produce a :28.2 final quarter from her horse to guarantee the win. Prince Of Sussex is owned by

was the confidence that I had. He had been racing pretty tough."

Walker admitted that the break by Meadowbranch Noble gave her an opportunity that otherwise might not have been available.

"I might have been in trouble," she said. "I was really hoping that Jessie's horse would bear out a bit and get tired, because we did go that first quarter a little bit."

A week earlier at Mohawk, Prince Of Sussex was driven by James Macdonald, but in mid-race, he stepped on a rival's wheel, went off-stride and finished 7th, far behind the winner. Apparently, Walker discussed that



The field of 10 Lady Drivers

NewImage Media Photos

miscue with MacDonald and there was clearly no repeat of that unfortunate occurrence.

Since 2012, Walker has never competed as many as 30 times in a single year, The Prince Of Sussex win was her 12th in 129 races. Despite her excellent work in that race, Walker has no urge to take on James Macdonald, Jody Jamieson, or Doug McNair et al.

"No," she laughs, "I'll stick to the hobby driving."

The ladies finished in the following order:

- Julie Walker – Prince Of Sussex
- Natasha Day – Zip Me Up
- Samara Johnson – Eden Onthehill
- Anita Oullette – Lion On Landon
- Marie-Claude Auger – Master Grand
- Maggie Jones – Blogmaster
- Brittany Kennedy – Belvedere Bronx
- Pam Forgie – Creditized
- Jessica Turenne – Meadowbranch Noble
- Marielle Enberg – Hey Ralphie

Radio Flyer Blaze: Interactive Riding Horse



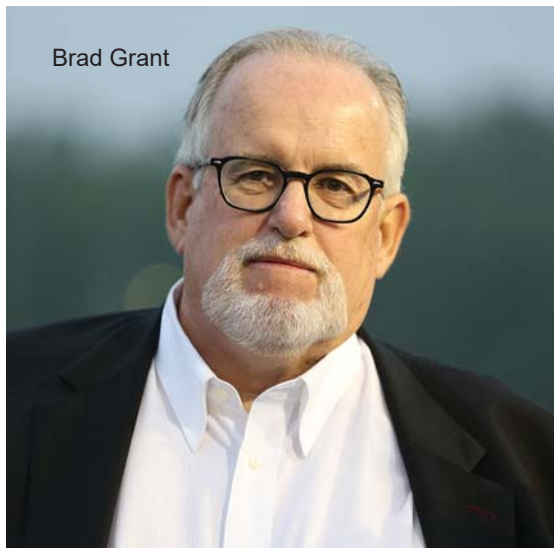
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Mohawk Million 2024:

The 5th edition of the Mohawk Million for 2-year-old trotters will occur on September 21, 2024, and the rules have changed from the original buy-in stipulations. It used to be that 9 owners would throw in \$100,000 each, and the winner of the William Wellwood Trot would get a free pass. This time around, it's just a \$50,000 buy-in and the Wellwood winner doesn't get the gift. This, of course, is better for owners as Woodbine is tossing in \$500,000 to keep the race at 7 figures.

On Wednesday March 20, a draw was necessitated to determine the 10 owners who will get to enter their trotters because a total of 21 entities were hoping to be chosen. Mark McKelvie, Director of Communications for Woodbine and Tony O'Sullivan, the Standardbred Secretary conducted the draw and the happy owners emerged from the tumbler in the following order:

- Gino Toscani
- Coyote Wynd Farms
- Diamond Creek
- Pryde Stables
- Noel Daley
- Hunterton Farms
- Blair Corbeil
- Brad Grant
- Tara Hills Stud
- Rankin & Venneri



Brad Grant

Brad Grant has been a major player in harness racing over several decades and threw in his \$100,000 for each of the first 2 Mohawk Millions. In each case, as the race drew near, he did not feel he had a rookie trotter good enough for the race, so he negotiated his slot. In 2020, he struck a deal with the owners of Venerate and that was a brilliant stroke, as the 2-year-old colt rallied from far back for Andrew McCarthy to win in 1:53.2. The next year, Grant once again negotiated his slot and ended up with a piece of Venerable, the filly who ripped to the front for David Miller in the first quarter from post 9. The rest of the field could not catch her as she stopped the clock in 1:54.2.

This year, Grant had to sweat it out a bit as his name was not called from the first 7 balls extricated from the hopper.

"I wasn't feeling very lucky, but thankfully my name got picked," says Grant. Ten people got lucky and 11 people unfortunately didn't."

Ideally, for Grant, this will be the year that a horse he owns gets into the race.

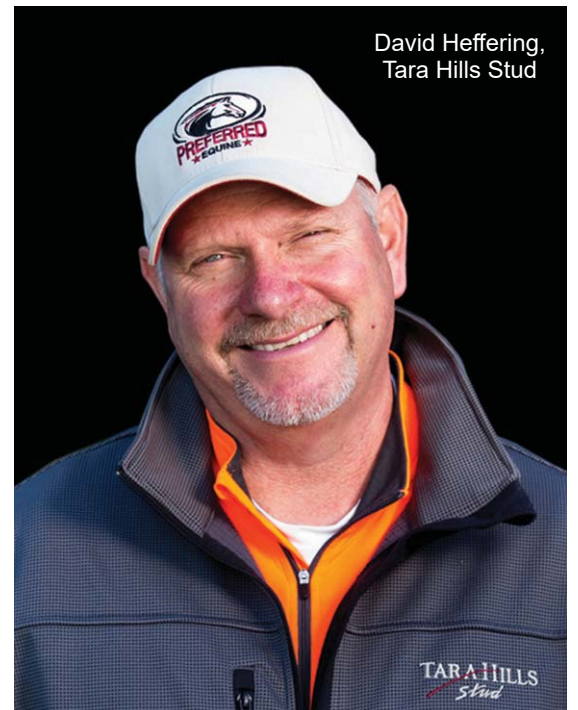
"If you talk to my trainers, I've got 6 that are good enough to be in it," he said. "But it's a long way to race day. I should have 1 or 2 that can qualify and be part of it. If not, I will reach out to people I know to see if they want a spot."

Grant appreciates that the changes for this year's Mohawk Million confirm the track's desire to keep the race going.

"I think Woodbine/Mohawk Park really stepped up and said, 'We want to keep this race going and here's



our commitment to doing that,'" he said. "It's a prestige race, it's in our backyard and I would really like to win it."



David Heffering, Tara Hills Stud

Tara Hills Stud is owned by David and Nora Heffering, and their motivation for securing a slot is not necessarily the same as many others.

"We're a little bit different," says David Heffering. "The reason why we bought the spot is because we had a good year last year, selling yearlings. We believe in investing in the business. We put in for a spot because it was more affordable. We want to promote our stallions. It's our hope that we can help someone else out. Ideally, it would be someone with a horse from a Tara Hills stallion. This year we've got Green Manalishi, Muscle Mass and Alarm Detector that have horses racing. But it doesn't have to be a Tara Hill Stallion."

The first 4 Mohawk Million winners were:

- 2020: Venerate 1:53.2
- 2021: Venerable 1:54.2
- 2022: Oh Well 1:54.2
- 2023: TCI 1:54.3



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Casse and the Sovereigns



No one in the history of Canadian horse racing has dominated on the trainer side like Mark Casse. Casse is a gut cinch to win the Sovereign for Outstanding Trainer at the Awards Ceremonies on April 18. In 2023, Casse took down 24 Stakes races at Woodbine. No other trainer hit double figures. Casse's Elysian Field won the Woodbine Oaks, his Paramount Prince captured the Plate Trial, and in the King's Plate, Paramount Prince finished 1st while Elysian Field was 2nd. Casse sent out the most horses (554) at Woodbine, won the most races (113) and his horses earned by far the most – \$7,791,319. As for the upcoming Sovereign Awards, 12 horses trained by Casse have been nominated in 8 categories. We got Mark Casse to evaluate the chances of all of them.

DTS: Am I correct that you've won 14 Sovereign Awards as trainer? Is that the number?

Casse: I don't know. I want to say that it's 15.

DTS: That's the definition of embarrassment of riches.

Casse: (laughing) Yeah.

DTS: I see that you've got a total of 12 horses nominated in 8 Sovereign Award categories. Does that match your math?

Casse: Yes, and then also Gary Barber as leading owner.

DTS: You'd be cheering for him in that category.

Casse: If he doesn't win, I would be shocked. He's given so much to racing,

especially in Canada. And it's kind of hard for me to believe that he hasn't already won the Sovereign Award.

DTS: Starting with the 2-Year-old Female category with Witwatersrand, you did beat Kevin Attard's Tripolina in the Mazarine Stakes.

Casse: Yeah. I think she should win. Like you said, she beat Kevin's filly.

DTS: The 2-Year-Old Male category. My Boy Prince had a pretty good record – 3 wins from 6 races. What do you think?

Casse: He was also 3rd in the Breeders Cup. I would consider him a shoo-in.

DTS: Both of the 3-year-old categories are fascinating. On the filly side, you've got Elysian Field. She won the Oaks, was 2nd in the plate, 2nd in the Breeders, but Fashionably Fab won her last 4. And what about your other nominee, Solo Album?

Casse: When you look at those 3 Fillies, you see that Solo Album actually won two grade 3s even though she was DQ'd in one of them. So, she's beaten the best company. Kevin's filly, Fashionably Fab beat only Ontario sires. I don't think she deserves to be with those other 2 fillies.

DTS: In the 3-year-old male category, does a Plate trial victory and a King's Plate win trump 6 sprint wins by Patches O'Houlihan?

Casse: That's a toughie. I'm going to leave that one to the voters.

DTS: You just had a win at Gulfstream on the tapeta by Paramount Prince in a really good time. Were you pleased with that?

Casse: I was very pleased, you know. It was his first start. He ran poorly in the Breeders, so we gave him a break. I thought he was impressive going a mile and an 8th first time after more than 5 months off. So, I was very happy, very proud. He's just an extremely nice horse.

DTS: Champion Female Turf Horse. Can you see anyone voting against

Fev Rover?

Casse: I don't think so, and I think she probably should be Horse of the Year as well. She won 2 Grade I's.

DTS: In the Male Turf Horse category: there's no sure thing in horse racing, but all three candidates are trained by Mark Casse – Lucky Score, My Boy, Prince Palazzi. Which one would you vote for?

Casse: I'm not answering that one. I feel confident we're going to win that category.

DTS: If there's a 3-way tie, you'd get three trophies.

Casse: I like that idea.

DTS: In the Female Sprinter category, do you see a chance for Our Flash Drive?

Casse: What are the other 2 fillies?

DTS: Fashionably Fab and Loyalty, who is trained by Josie Carroll.

Casse: I think Loyalty is a shoo-in there.

DTS: And Male Sprinter – it would be hard to see your Lucky Score beating Patches O'Houlihan.

Casse: I agree.

DTS: We seem to have this conversation each year. And you have indicated that since you have won so many times, you don't just need to have the best year. You have to crush it, win by many lengths to avoid the possibility of an "anyone but Casse" movement. And in 2023 you won the Oaks, you won the Plate Trial, and your Plate Trial horse won the King's Plate. Your Oaks horse came 2nd. You won your typical haul of Stakes races. Do you feel you really hit it out of the park last year?

Casse: I think 2023 was one of our best years ever in Toronto, maybe the best. There have been times in the past where I felt that I might lose the Sovereign Award, but this year we probably deserve it more than most. So, I would be disappointed if we didn't win it this year.

Already Winners!

The 49th annual Sovereign Awards will be presented on April 18, but three deserving individuals already know they've been honoured.

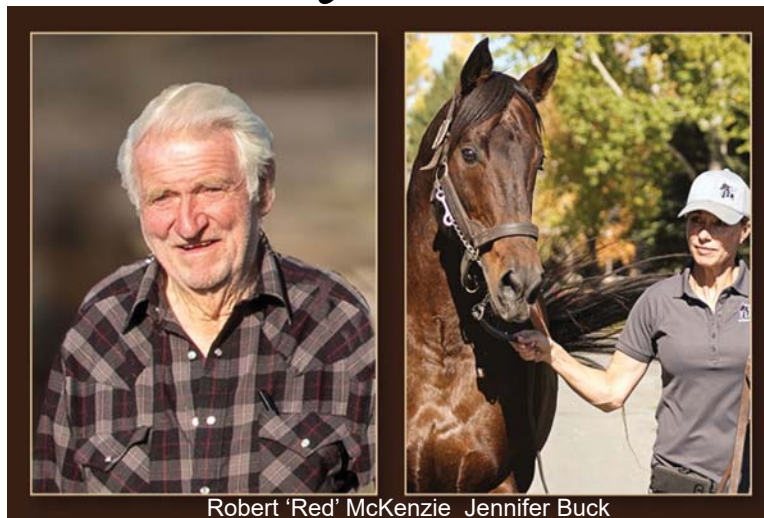
A special Sovereign Award will be given to 96-year-old Robert "Red" McKenzie, who on June 23, 2023, became the oldest person in Canadian horse racing history to saddle a thoroughbred winner. McKenzie achieved that impressive milestone when Entitled Star won the 2nd race at Century Downs that day under apprentice jockey Meagan Fraser. Entitled Star is hardly a neophyte, either. This was his 13th win in his 80th race. McKenzie has training statistics that go well before Equibase's 1976 figures, but since then he has sent out over 5,700 horses and recorded 623 wins.

This year, the Jockey Club of Canada has initiated a new award for Outstanding Off-Track Worker and the first recipient of this trophy is Jennifer Buck, manager of Highfield Stock Farm in Okotoks, Alberta. As such, Buck oversees the day-to-day operation of the farm. Their top sire is Fed Biz, who won 6 of his 19 races, including the \$100,000 El Cajon Stakes at Del Mar in 2012, the \$151,000 San Fernando Stakes at Santa Anita in 2013, and the \$201,000 San Diego Handicap at Del Mar in 2014.

We pointed out to Buck that of all the horse people in Canada, she was considered the most appropriate person to receive this new award.

"I'm lucky because of all the people in Canada, I was nominated," she emphasizes. "To take the time to nominate somebody that you think has impacted the community – that I'm pretty thankful for."

A high percentage of Sovereign Awards are snatched by horses, trainers, and owners in Ontario, so for Buck and her work in Alberta to be recognized is special to her.



Robert 'Red' McKenzie Jennifer Buck

"I have to say, I got my start from people in Ontario," she says, "The first farm I worked at in 1988 in Alberta was called Glenview Stables. The manager of that farm, Brian Ferguson and his wife, Laurie came from Windfields Farm."

Buck is always thrilled when a horse bred at Highfield goes to on to do great things on the racetrack.

"Onestaratatime was a yearling when I first started here, and she stood out for me," says Buck.

"I was very excited for her. She was just an outstanding athlete – a beautiful filly. She sold well at the Alberta sales and went on to do some great things."

Onestaratatime won 6 of her 18 starts. Within a three month span in 2016, she took down the North Oaks Handicap, the Sonoma Handicap, and the Alberta Oaks, all of those at Northlands Park.

Buck also recalls the excellent 5 for 9 career of Oneofthegirls.

"Oneofthegirls came out of a mare that I wanted to breed to our stallion, Exhi. I did that mating and she became Stakes placed," says Buck.

The uplifting accomplishments of horses after they leave Highfield makes all the hard work worthwhile.

"I guess that's what's nice about getting this award," she says. "We are all responsible for the success of our horses and it begins right at the start."

Buck will be attending this year's Sovereign Awards, and she might be easy to find.

"Coming from Alberta, I'll be wearing boots," she laughs. "I'll probably be the one of the most misbehaving in the room."

For over 30 years, Michelle Armata has been taking care of horses. Her sister, Josie De Paulo nominated her, and the Jockey Club of Canada

determined Armata should be the Groom of the Year.

"I was kind of shocked. I didn't know what to say. I was speechless," says Armata. It was in 2016 when Caren, groomed by Armata was named the Sovereign award winner as Outstanding 3-Year-Old Filly of 2016 as well as Horse of the Year. Caren piled up over \$821,000 in earnings by winning 9 of her 17 starts. She had a sensational 4-race win streak as a 3-year-old, capturing the Bison City Stakes, the Wonder Where, the Ontario Colleen, and the Carotene Stakes, all at Woodbine over a period of just over 3 months."

Armata cites a baby of Caren as "one of my favourites."

"Curlin Candy was amazing," she says. "She was different from her mom – different temperament and different personality, but she was just a sweetheart."

Despite the long hours and the low pay, Armata wouldn't look anywhere else for employment.

"We're very lucky to be in the business we're in," she says. "How many people can actually get work every day and just say, 'I love what I do?'" I am so fortunate to be with the horses."

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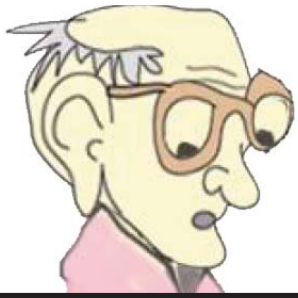
Special Events

<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: blue;">WEDNESDAY RACE DATES 2024</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday May 8, 15, 22, 29 1:30pm First Race</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday June 5, 12, 26 1:30pm First Race</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday July 3, 10, 17, 31 1:30pm First Race</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday August 7, 14, 21 1:30pm First Race</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday September 11, 18, 25 12:55pm First Race</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday October 2, 9, 23 12:55pm First Race</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; color: blue;">SUNDAY RACE DATES 2024</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday June 16 Father's Day 12:55pm First Race</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday July 21 Craft Brewery Day 12:55pm First Race</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday August 25 Family Fun Day 12:55pm First Race</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sunday September 1 Labour Day Weekend 12:55pm First Race</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Monday October 14 United Way Day 12:55pm First Race</p>
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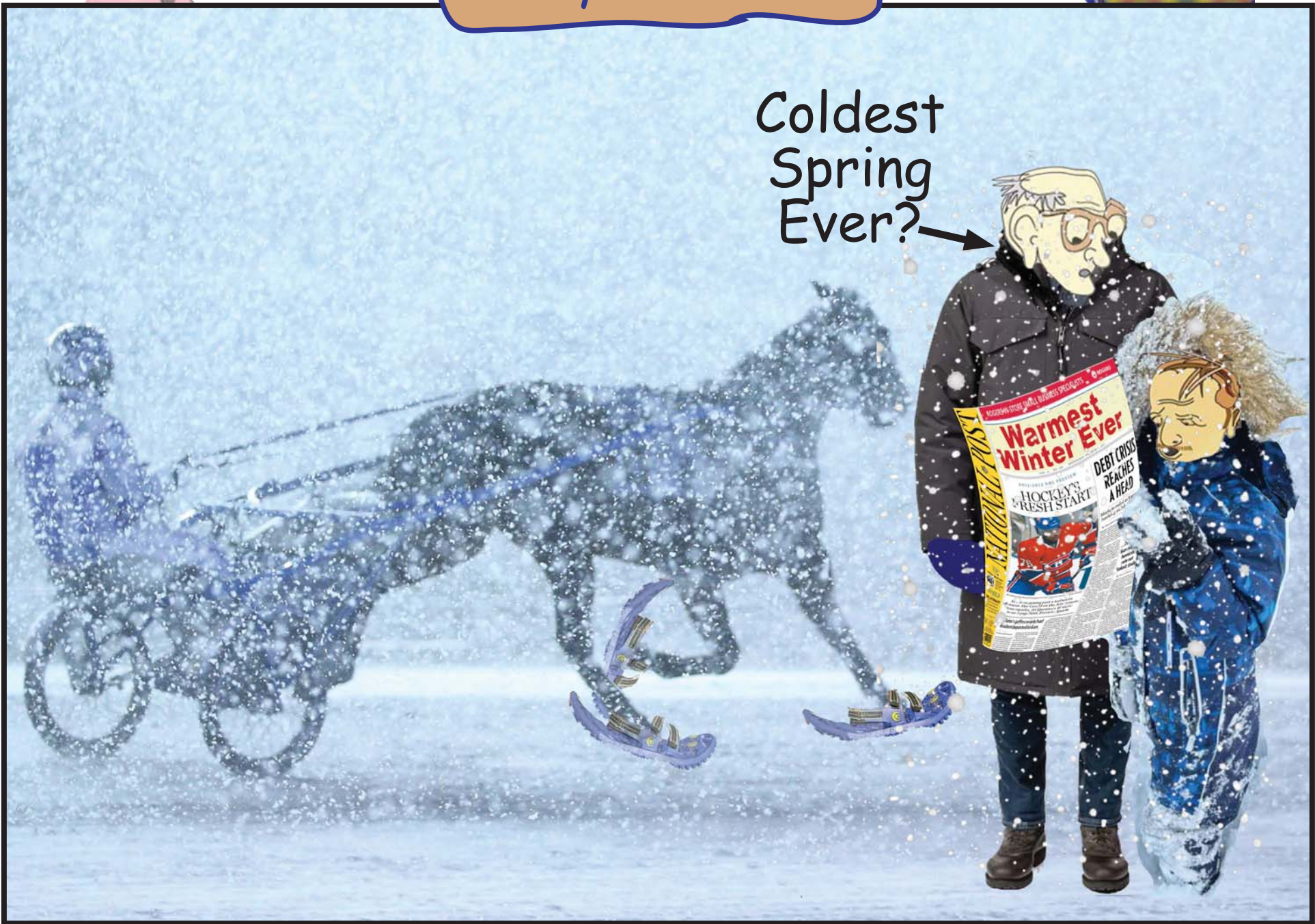
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Kentucky Derby Preps

February 10, \$250,000 Sam F. Davis, Tampa Bay Downs, Mile and a 16th:

No More Time, under Paco Lopez, was sent right to the lead and hugged the rail, setting the pace down the backstretch. As they turned for home, No More time, opened up 3 lengths on the 11 others and only a very late move by Agate Road (José Ortiz) denied the winner a margin of more than 1 ¼ lengths. The time for the distance was 1:43.26. No More Time is trained by Jose D'Angelo for Morplay Racing. He has won half of his 4 races and he paid \$8.60.

February 17, \$400,000 Risen Star Stakes, Fair Grounds, Mile and an 8th:



Sierra Leone, ridden by Tyler Gaffalione went off as the lukewarm 5-2 betting choice, but was far back in 9th down the backstretch, some 7 lengths behind the early leader, Track Phantom (Joel Rosario). On a surface categorized as sloppy, Sierra Leone found a faster stride, fanned 9-wide into the stretch and despite losing significant ground, passed all rivals ahead of him and splashed to the wire a half-length winner in 1:52.13. Sierra Leone is trained by Chad Brown and owned by Peter Brand, Brook Smith, Derrick Westerberg, Michael Smith and Mrs. John Magnier. The horse won for the 2nd time in its 3rd career race and paid \$7.40.

February 18, \$273,165 Hyacinth Stakes, Japan, 1 Mile:



Since 2003, no winner of the Hyacinth Stakes has ever hit the board in the Kentucky Derby. However, in recent years, Japan has demonstrated increasing success in Breeders' Cup races, so it's probably just a matter of time until they send over a Derby Champion. In the Hyacinth, Ramjet, under Kosei Miura, hopped a little coming out of the gate and relaxed in last place of the 11-horse field down the backstretch. Even entering the stretch, Ramjet had just one other runner ahead of him, but clicked into

an impressive gear in the final 200 meters to mow down all those in front to win by 3 lengths. The trainer is Shozo Sasaki for owner Koji Maeda. Ramjet paid \$24.10 and earned 30 Derby points, making him the leader in the Japan series, which sends the horse with the most points to Churchill Downs.

February 18, \$400,000 Sunland Park Derby, Mile and a 16th:



This is also a race that does not necessarily point you towards a Kentucky Derby winner. However, in 2009, Mine That Bird was 4th in the Sunland, then shocked all racing fans with that amazing Calvin Borel rail skimming upset at 50-1. This year, the favourite was Stronghold, ridden by Antonio Fresu, and Fresu rode Stronghold as if he knew he had the best horse. The pair stalked the early leader, Lucky Jeremy (Christina Ramos) then moved to the lead on the far turn. In the stretch, Stronghold was strong and holding his advantage, finding the wire a relaxed 2 ½ lengths over a late moving Alotaluck (Oscar Ceballos). Stronghold, a son of Ghostzapper, is trained by Philip D'Amato and owned by Eric and Sharon Waller. He paid \$4.40 to win.

February 24, \$1,250,000 Rebel Stakes, Oaklawn Park, Mile and a 16th:



Off at 4-5, Timberlake, under Cristian Torres, was always in the leading vanguard of this 12-horse field. Third after ¾ of a mile, Timberlake made an aggressive 4-wide move coming into the stretch and was clearly the best down the lane, winning by 2 lengths in 1:44.00. Getting a cheque for \$618,759 in your first start as a 3-year-old is impressive – this win improved Timberlake to 3 for 6 in his career. He is trained by Brad Cox and owned by Windstar Farm. The

win ticket was \$3.60.

March 2, \$420,000 Fountain of Youth Stakes, Gulfstream Park, Mile and a 16th:



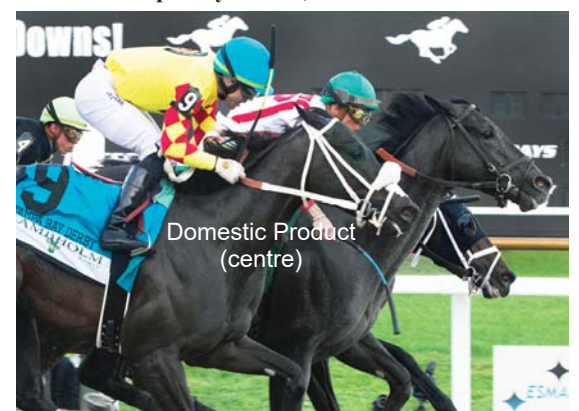
Only 5 contested this one and the favourite was Dornoch who was crushed down to 1-5. Jockey Luis Saez eliminated any suspense, taking Dornoch to the lead from the start and refusing to yield. At the finish line, Dornoch was safe by almost 2 lengths in 1:41.64. Trained by Danny Gargan, Dornoch improved to 3 wins in 5 races and paid \$2.40.

March 3, \$300,000 San Felipe Stakes, Santa Anita Park, Mile and a 16th: Imagination (left)



There were only 4 in this race and the 4-5 favourite, Imagination didn't exactly romp. Under Frankie Dettori, Imagination took the lead after half a mile, but had to repel Wine Me Up (Juan Hernandez) in the lane to prevail by a head in 1:44.56. Imagination won for the 2nd time in 5 races and has never been worse than 2nd. He is trained by Bob Baffert and owned by Madaket Stables, SF Racing and Starlight Racing. The win ticket was \$3.80.

March 9, \$400,000 Tampa Bay Derby, Tampa Bay Downs, Mile and a 16th:



This one had a furious finish. Domestic Product, under Tyler Gaffalione parlayed a 5th place position down the backstretch into a challenge for the lead as the field galloped to the finish line, but No More Time (Javier Castellano) and Grand Mo the First (Sammy Camacho)

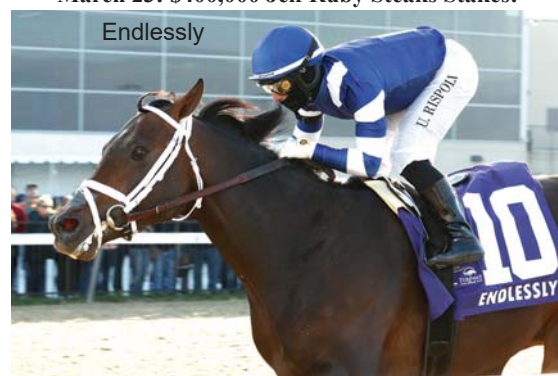
were battling for the win late. At the wire, Domestic Product won by a neck in 1:45.47 for trainer Chad Brown and the owners from Klaravich Stable. The result of this race left many fans angry and frustrated. There was a major problem with the tote system and wagering on the Derby was halted well before the race went off. The track was unable to post the payoffs and told fans they would have to come back the next day to cash their tickets.

**March 23: \$1,000,000 Louisiana Derby,
Fair Grounds:**



This one was at a mile and $\frac{3}{16}$ ths and had, perhaps, the most eye-catching performance of all the Derby preps. Catching Freedom under Flavien Prat went off as the second betting choice, but appeared out of it down the backstretch as he languished last of 11, some 9 lengths from early leader, Track Phantom, the 2-1 favourite. But as the field turned for home, Prat tilted Catching Freedom 5-wide with acceleration and one by one, the colt passed rivals, finding the wire a length the best in 1:56.16. Brad Cox is the trainer, and the horse is owned by Albaugh Family Stables. By winning for the 3rd time in 5 starts, catching Freedom earned 100 Derby points and paid \$8.60.

March 23: \$400,000 Jeff Ruby Steaks Stakes:



Endlessly was not quite as spectacular as Catching Freedom, but he did rally from far back in this 9-furlong race. Jockey Umberto Rispoli held Endlessly in 7th place down the backstretch, 4 lengths from leader Lucky Jeremy (Gerardo Corrales). At the far turn, Endlessly responded to urging and quickly zipped to the front and was powerful to the wire, crushing by 4 lengths in 1:50.15. The winning trainer is Michael McCarthy for the owners, Amerman Racing. Endlessly improved to 5 wins in 6 races and paid \$4.88. Strangely, after the race, McCarthy announced that Endlessly would not run in the Kentucky Derby but would contest the Grade 2 American Turf Stakes on the same day.

"I think his best days down the road are on turf," said

McCarthy.

The Jeff Ruby Steaks Stakes was the 38th race designated as a Kentucky Derby prep and so far, 34 different horses had posted wins in the series. The only 4 animals with two wins each were Catching Freedom (Smarty Jones, Louisiana), Dornoch (Remsen, Fountain of Youth), Track Phantom (Lecomte, Gun Runner) and Timberlake (Champagne, Rebel).

A new gig for Gary Boulanger



Life continues to be eventful for Gary Boulanger. After riding Twin City to a 6th place finish in the Prince of Wales Stakes at Fort Erie on September 12 last year, Boulanger announced his retirement. He was 56 and had ridden 3,685 winners in a career that had spanned 30 years. The industry has not ignored Boulanger's contribution – in 2017, he was the recipient of the Avelino Gomez Award and in 2020 was inducted into the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame.

Then, on March 13 of this year, Boulanger was hired as the farm manager for CamHaven Farms in Caledon. According to a release from the facility, Boulanger "will be spearheading all aspects of our farm pertaining to rehabilitation, post-surgical recovery, breaking young stock, and fitness development for all breeds."

"I'm grateful they're giving me this opportunity," says Boulanger. "To show my knowledge regarding the development of horses, even just fitness development for horses coming off a layoff. People who knew me at the track knew I wasn't just a jockey. I was a horseman who understands horses."

Hiring a jockey to take care of thoroughbreds makes impeccable sense. Boulanger rode over 25,000 of them and clearly has an acute feel for what is best for every one of them.

"They're not all made the same," he says. "It's being able to recognize the ones you need to maybe back off their training because they're not getting it, and we don't want to cause problems mentally where they start not liking what their job is. Horses may be similar in many ways, but no two are exactly the same."

Boulanger's riding career includes a Queen's Plate win with Sam-Son Farm's wonderful filly, Dancethruthedawn. The Plate win on June 24, 2001, came 2 weeks after Dancethruthedawn had romped home at 3-5 in the Woodbine Oaks.

Much has been printed about Boulanger's painful career. In January 2005, he suffered a catastrophic injury in a fall at Gulfstream. His injuries included a ruptured spleen, broken ribs, a detached tendon in his left elbow and more frightening – a blood clot in his brain. As a result of surgery to remove part of his skull, Boulanger flat-lined twice on the operating table.

Incredibly, he returned to race riding, compiling 481 wins from 2013 into 2023.

Boulanger's first impression of CamHaven is a very positive one. Spread over 50 acres, CamHaven offers equine rehabilitation, surgical recovery, and fitness development.

"They've got a cold-water spa, an aqua treadmill, a regular treadmill and a scale that can weigh anything," he says. "The barn has heated floors that are cleaned every day and are just pristine. The track is $\frac{5}{8}$ ths of a mile with a starting gate you can introduce the babies to when they get to that stage, so they don't go to the track blind."

Horses owned by CamHaven are off to a great start in 2024. Reason to Dream, a 4-year-old gelding won a maiden special weight at the Fair Grounds on February 15. On February 25, at the same track, the 3-year-old filly, Sweet Charlize, scored at 9-1 in a maiden-breaking effort and the 4-year-old, One True Gentleman ran away from 8 others in a Maiden Special Weight at the Fair Grounds on March 7.

All 3 of those winners are trained by Steve Flint.

Canada Out of Town 2024

Fair Grounds, February 12:



Velocitor

Hodges Photography

Velocitor, owned by Al and Bill Ulwelling, won the Prince of Wales Stakes in 2023 for trainer Kevin Attard. For this 6th race at a mile and 70, he was trained by Gary Scherer and ridden by David Cohen. Cohen had the 4-year-old close from the start, and in the stretch, Velocitor wore down Behemah Star to win by a neck. This is the gelding's 5th win in 13 tries and he returned \$34.80.

Fair Grounds, February 15:



Reason To Dream

Hodges Photography

CamHaven Farms sent out Reason to Dream, who appeared to be well named. It was the 5th race, a Maiden Special Weight, and Reason to Dream went off at 27-1, the longest price in the field. Despite that, jockey Mitchell Murrill went right to the front with Reason to Dream and late in the stretch, he was able to repel a dogged challenge from Auto Dial to win by a neck. This was Reason to Dream's first win from 3 starts and the first victory in 22 tries for CamHaven. Steven Flint is the trainer and Reason to Dream paid \$57.40.

Gulfstream, February 15:

Bringer of Rain



Acoglianesse Photo

It was an excellent day for Woodbine trainer, Bill Tharrenos. The 4th race was a mile and a 16th for \$16,000 claimers. Javier Castellano timed it perfectly with Bringer of Rain, rallying the 5-year-old Ontario-bred from last down the backstretch to win by an expanding 2 ¼ lengths in 1:41.48. Bringer of Rain, owned by

Gus Diakouloukas, improved to 3 for 24 and paid \$7.



Acoglianesse Photo

The only other horse that Tharrenos sent out that day was the 4-year-old Mehlek in the 8th, a mile on the turf with a purse of \$37,000. This was another masterful ride from José Ortiz, who had Mehlek far back for the first half mile but saved ground along the hedge coming for home and shot up the inside with a furious last 8th in less than :12 to win by almost 2 lengths in the excellent time of 1:33.23 (the track record is 1:31.41). Mehlek, owned by Bull and Bear Stable, won for the 4th time in 13 races and paid \$12.10.

Gulfstream, February 18:



Be Like Clint

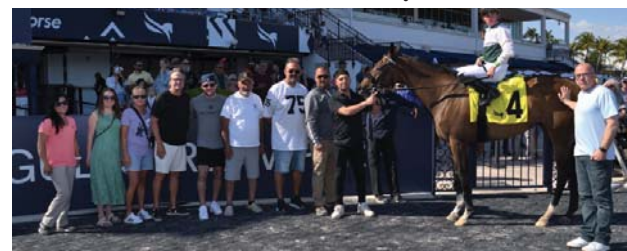
Adam Coglianese Photo

Be Like Clint was sent out by Marty Drexler and carried Tyler Gaffalione. Gaffalione had Be Like Clint comfortable down the backstretch of this mile and a 16th race, though they were 6th, about 5 lengths from the leader. Approaching the far turn, Be Like Clint initiated a 6-0 wide move with appreciable momentum and passed rivals one by one, getting the lead just before the wire to win by half a length. This was a typical Bruno Schickedanz



transaction – he had claimed Be Like Clint just a month earlier for \$16,000, lost him in this race for \$20,000 and got the winners' share of \$18,600. Be Like Clint won for the 4th time in 23 races and paid \$6.40.

Gulfstream, February 21:



Drexler posed in the winner's circle for the 8th time this spring in Hallandale. Amazin Queen rallied from last of 6 down the

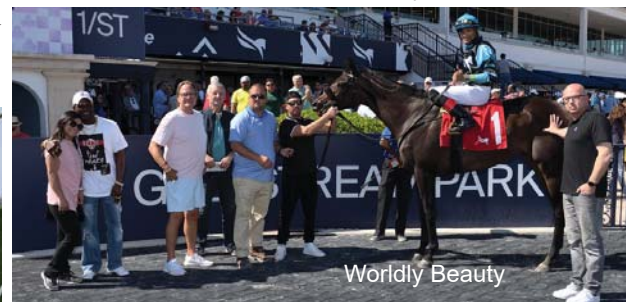


Amazin Queen

Adam Coglianese Photo

backstretch to give Tyler Gaffalione the impressive win by 3 ½ widening lengths after a mile and 16th on the Tapeta. Amazin Queen is a 5-year-old mare, who won for the 4th time in her 24th race. She is owned by Drexler, and she paid \$16.80.

Gulfstream, February 24



Worldly Beauty

There were two winners on the same day for Marty Drexler. The 5th was at a mile and a 16th for fillies and mares with a \$10,000 tag. Worldly Beauty got a nicely timed ride from Edwin Gonzalez to win by a head. The 4-year-old filly is owned by Robert Tribbet and Glenn Bechtel and with her 4th win in 13 tries, she paid \$12.20.



Sand Dancer

The 9th race offered a purse of \$26,000 and attracted a field of 11 horses, all of whom could be claimed for \$10,000. The distance was a mile and 70, and Edgard Zayas rallied Sand Dancer from 7th down the backstretch to first by 3 lengths in 1:39.64. Sand Dancer is a 9-year-old gelding owned by Bruno Schickedanz, and by winning for the 7th time in 45 races, she paid \$4.

Gulfstream, March 1:

The 5th race was a \$35,000 claim race with a purse of \$36,000. Drexler sent out the 4-year-old Ontario-bred, Ninetyfour Expos. With Javier Castellano aboard, Ninetyfour Expos led from the start and repelled a pair of late chargers to win by a head at the end of this mile on the turf. The owner is Elliott Logan of TEC Racing, and with his 3rd win in 11 tries, Ninetyfour Expos paid \$16.60. The 1994 Montreal Expos are, unfortunately, famous for compiling the most wins in major league baseball that year, but because the season was split due to a players' strike, they somehow were not eligible for the playoffs.

Gulfstream, March 3:



Grand Journey

Drexler sent out Grand Journey for TEC Racing in the 3rd race which was a \$12,500 claiming event at a mile and a 16th. Jockey Luis Saez had Grand Journey on top most of the way and got all he needed in the stretch to win by neck. Grand Journey was owned by TEC Racing but was claimed out of this heat. The 9-year-old gelding won for the 10th time in 32 races and paid just \$3.40.

Penn National March 6:

The 6th race had a modest purse of \$15,000 and a field of 7 bottom feeder \$5,000 claimers. Julio Hernandez took Twixter straight to the front in this mile test, and with benign fractions of :49.67 and 1:15.15, discouraged all opposition. Twixter found the finish line first by ¾ of a length in 1:41.14. Steven Chircop was the winning trainer and owner. (Note the past tense as Twixter was claimed from this race after posting his 3rd win in 14 races and paying \$7.20.) This was Chircop's 10th win of 2024 from 41 entries at Penn.

Gulfstream, March 8:

Classic Mo Town



Adam Coglianese Photo



Twixter

Equi-Photo

Marty Drexler saddled Classic Mo Town in the 8th race, a mile and 70 for allowance horses. Jockey Irad Ortiz stalked from 3rd, came wide into the stretch, but was running faster than the others to the wire and won by a widening 3 lengths in 1:40.20. It was another win for owner Bruno Schickedanz as Classic Mo Town won for the 3rd time in 14 tries, giving Drexler his 155th win at the Gulfstream meet. Classic Mo Town, a 4-year-old gelding, paid \$4.80.

Charles Town, March 13:

It was just the second time this year that Steven Chircop had started a horse at Charles Town and he's now 2 for 2. Lloyd was ridden by Abnel Bocachica in this 6 ½ furlong dash for \$5,000 claimers. Bocachica stalked the pace from the beginning, came to the outside of the longtime leader at the head of the stretch, gained the lead and repelled a late move from the 2nd-place horse to win by a neck in 1:21.60. That time is 5 seconds off the course record, confirming that Lloyd is not related to Pink Lloyd. Lloyd is a 4-year-old Ontario bred who won for the 2nd time in 4 tries and he paid \$10.40.

Gulfstream, March 20:



Adam Coglianese Photo

Marty Drexler sent out Mr Narcissistic in the 7th race, a 5-furlong dash for \$25,000 claimers. With Tyler Gaffalione in the saddle, Mr Narcissistic stalked the pace from 3rd, accelerated in the stretch and got his head up just before the wire to win in :56.28. Mr. Narcissistic is out of the mare, Conceited, and he paid \$6 to win. Despite the fact it was just his 2nd win in 29 races, Mr Narcissistic



Mr. Narcissistic

Adam Coglianese Photo

boasted after the race that he made Gaffalione, Drexler and owner Bruno Schickedanz look good. Then he posted the win on X, TikTok, WhatsApp, YouTube, and Instagram, advising all who were paying attention that he was the greatest thoroughbred of all time.

Gulfstream, March 21:



Adam Coglianese Photo

The Drexler train keeps rolling along. The 8th race was a starter's allowance for fillies and mares with a purse of \$42,000 and a distance of a mile and 70 on the all-weather. Luis Saez gave Wicked Mercury an aggressive front-running approach, and it paid off with an easy 4 ½ length win. Wicked Mercury was

claimed from Bruno Schickedanz for \$20,000 on February 7, so Drexler simply claimed the horse back a month later on behalf of Schickedanz for the same price. That was a good move. Wicked Mercury is now a 7-year-old mare who has 3 wins and 2 seconds from her last 5 races. She paid \$9.20 to win.

Penn National, March 21:

Race 4 was for \$8,000 claimers at 6 furlongs and the favourite was Romantic Gamble, a 5-year-old Ontario-bred, trained by Steven Chircop. Jockey Julio Hernandez allowed Romantic Gamble to watch the early leaders from 4th, then made a 3-wide move at the head of the stretch, then had to battle to the finish line to repel a rival, winning by a neck in 1:11.22. Romantic Gamble posted his 6th win in his 24th start. He is owned by Chircop and Eric Ross and he paid \$4.80.

Laurel Park, March 22:

Chircop and Ross also own the 4-year-old filly Mo Tough who, apparently wasn't very tough in the 10th race, a mile and 16th for \$10,000 claimers. Against only 4 opponents, Mo Tough carried Angel Cruz to a 3-length win in 1:49.69, a mere 8 seconds off the course record. Chircop claimed Mo Tough at Woodbine last November and since then, the filly has won twice with a 2nd and two 3rds. Mo Tough paid \$3.60.

Gulfstream, March 27:



Steel Racer

The 7th race was an allowance optional claim with a field of 7 going a mile on the dirt. Irad Ortiz had Steel Racer close throughout, moved to the lead at the top of the stretch and withstood the only other one in the race that seemed interested. Steel Racer won by ¾ of a length in 1:37.51. This was Marty Drexler's 19th win in 2024 from 90 starters and he did it for owner Elliott Logan and TEC Racing. Logan is the Thoroughbred Owner of the Month in this issue (page 20). Steel Racer won for the 4th time in 12 starts and paid \$17.



Trainer Michelle Love by Chris Lomon



Starting Gate

- 22 per cent win rate in 2023
- Recorded first stakes win of her career when Foolish Games took last year's running of the Thunder Bay
- Set personal-best marks across the board in 2023, including wins, top-three finishes, and purse earnings
- Top horses included Foolish Games, Dissectologist, Reload's Rebel, Chasing Trouble, and Walter Me Lad
- First win came on May 20, 2013, at Woodbine, when Love Hammer eked out a nose victory at 12-1 in a six-furlong main track race

Opening Quarter

"I had a lot of very nice 2-year-olds from the year before that I hadn't started, so we felt that we could have a good 2023. When it comes to 2-year-olds, you generally have to be patient with them, but it paid off."

Half Mile

"All of our horses tried every time, which is all you can really ask for. I was very happy with our year."

"Definitely winning the Thunder Bay was the big highlight. But even in the Rondeau Bay at Fort Erie, Foolish Games ran a huge race. I have never screamed so loud in my life. We got beat by a nose, but she ran huge. It was her first time on the dirt, so you don't know what will happen with how she will handle the surfaces, the shipping, all of that. Wait until you see her this year – she's big and healthy, and she looks beautiful. I am so excited."

"We watch the replay of the Thunder Bay all the time. It gives you goosebumps. It is such a great group of owners, and it was the first stakes win for all of them, as well as it being mine. It was huge for us."

Stretch Drive

"Confidence is one thing that I learned about myself last year. I also depend on my help a lot. I am so fortunate to have such great grooms and hotwalkers. Omar [jockey, Moreno] and I gallop all the horses, so it is a great team environment. Everything just came together for our barn last year."

"When you look back, it does put a smile on your face. It also pushes you to set the bar higher. Obviously, a lot has to happen for everything to go according to plan, but it was a year that we are proud of."

Finish Line

"I have nine 2-year-olds, so it could be a turning point year for us. I don't push my 2-year-olds – as soon as they have an issue, we just turn them out. As soon as they need time, we give them time."

"We have five older horses, which makes for a nice mix. I have two Souper Speedy babies that could be early. They are training already, and they are pretty forward."

"I like all of our 2-year-olds. We have two of them training at Woodbine, and the others are training at our farm. I like them all. You can't win races without good horses. Hopefully, they continue their development and the ones from last year come back and do well too."

In this March 18 edition of Woodbine's Monday Morning Quarter Pole, feature writer Chris Lomon talks with trainer Michelle Love as she looks back on her career-best 2023 campaign, and ahead to the 2024 racing season. For just one year, 2012, Love was a quarter horse jockey at Ajax Downs. She burst from the gate 63 times and won 9 of her heats. The next year, she morphed into a thoroughbred trainer, and Equibase shows that she has won 30 races from 242 entries, with \$1,146,346 in purse earnings.



HBPA of Ontario

Administrative Office

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
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- Physically demanding



EXERCISE RIDER

- Experience with Thoroughbred racehorses at a Track or equivalent a must
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- Detect any lameness problems at an early stage
- Suggest changes to the training regime to benefit individual horses
- Physically demanding



HOTWALKER

- Entry level position
- Experience with horses an asset
- Hand walking the horses to cool them down after training and/or racing
- Physically demanding





Melissa Keith on the mic at Rideau Carleton

Melissa Keith Calling the Shots at Rideau:

at Western Fair and the Track On 2 in Alberta. Keith laughingly recalls a memorable moment when she was visiting a Florida racetrack.

“I did call the fastest qualifier in Pompano history years ago,” she recalls. “I was waiting in the rain as Gabe Prewitt was stuck in traffic for most of the qualifiers that day.”

Keith is an excellent choice for the Ottawa track. She has a crisp, clear voice, a quick wit when a horse’s name amuses her, and a lifetime of knowledge of the sport.

“At Rideau Carleton, I know the horses, drivers, and trainers fairly well,” she says. “I’ve been handicapping there for going on five years. It has to be appealing. It has to be accurate, and it’s important to have a knowledge of whom you’re calling – who are these horses?”

On that Sunday when she made her debut, Keith started with race 2. The first race was called by McMillan, as a symbolic passing of the baton.

“He wanted to do that to hand it over and it was very gracious of him,” says Keith. “He was working very hard to do that within the limits of having this cancer. He’s a very intelligent caller and he was grasping for words, and that doesn’t reflect who he is. John is still involved as a horse owner and trainer, and he told me to call or text any time for advice. And I will.”

There was one terrific moment of poignancy on Keith’s opening night. The 6th race was a \$7,800 pace, and Dylans Bank, driven by Jimmy Gagnon went off at 2-5. Since October 2020, this 7-year-old gelding has been owned and trained by McMillan. When Dylans Bank romped to the wire an easy winner by 8 lengths, you could hear a slight emotional crack in Keith’s call.

When asked if any other race callers have influenced her, Keith responds with a veritable encyclopedia of talented people.

“I always loved Frank Salive’s calls,” she begins. “And Larry Lederman – losing him was really sad. His



Keith at the Dan Patch Awards

Here’s another example of horse racing punching a hole in the so called “glass ceiling.” In late March, Melissa Keith was hired as the race caller at Rideau Carleton, the harness track in Ottawa. Keith has become the first woman in Canada to hold a full-time position as a horse race announcer and the first and only full-time female harness racing announcer in North America. (Jessica Paquette calls the thoroughbreds at Parx). Keith started on Sunday, March 24. As terrific as the opportunity is for her, it did have a bitter-sweet flavour to it. Keith is taking over from long-time caller, John McMillan, whose condition is not permitting him to continue.

“John is dealing with a serious health issue,” said Keith. “He has a form of cancer – glioblastoma – and he felt it was affecting his race calls to the point that he wasn’t satisfied that he was able to do it to the level that he demanded of himself. So, he spoke with racing manager Peter Andrusek, and they agreed they would look at getting another full-time announcer and I got the call. I said, ‘Yes.’”

It’s interesting that they didn’t even post the job opening. Keith had clearly identified herself as a winning candidate that the track wanted above all others. She has had some experience on the mic as a race caller, with part-time gigs and guest appearances

calls were always fantastic, creative, funny. He had such a good voice. John Hernan, formerly of Yonkers, gets very little credit for some reason. I’ve been in the booth with him, and he was so dynamic. Ken Warkentin has been very kind and motivational. He sponsored the USHWA youth race calling contest last year that the Canadian chapter put on. He’s a legend of Canadian race calling and still active at the Meadowlands. Of course, John McMillan – what a class act. I was glad he got the chance to call at Mohawk Park recently before he chose to retire. And Joe Kelly at Truro Raceway. He’s fantastic. Sugar Doyle and Ken Middleton. Dan Loiselle is another voice I’ve heard so many times from Woodbine and he was one of the best, and Robert Geller is an absolute unique act. I love his voice and his elegant race calls. He’s on the thoroughbred side, but it just goes to show you take in what you like and hopefully learn something from some of the best when you hear them a lot.”

Melissa Keith brings a substantial resumé to her new position. She is a 3-time winner of the John Hervey Award in the U.S. – twice for Feature Writing and once for News and Commentary, and she has also won a pair of O’Brien Awards for Outstanding Written Work. In 2023, Keith was an on-air racing analyst and in-track handicapper at Truro Raceway in Nova Scotia.

A Horse Named Paquet



New Image Media

On March 21, in a \$17,000 trot at Mohawk Park, a 3-year-old colt named Paquet, driven by Jody Jamieson, surged to the top just past the ¾ mark, threw a :281. final quarter at his overmatched opponents and won by over 10 lengths in 1:56.2. It turns out there's quite an emotional background to this horse.

A man called Brian Paquet died recently. He was 78 and suffered from complications from a lung infection. Paquet, who made his fortunes in the turkey and chicken business in Quebec, had a long history in the standardbred game. Paquet was partners with Francis Richard on a terrific trotter named Fashion Frenzie, who won 24 times and earned over \$1.1 million. Paquet also owned horses with the Jamiesons.

"He's had horses with my dad, Carl, in the past," says Jody Jamieson. "And up until his untimely death, he had 3 or 4 horses with us. One of them

was Dion Seelster, and he hurt his tendon badly last winter. So, we sent him home early to start rehabilitation. Then Brian passed away and his wife and daughters wanted to keep the horse and see how he turned out."

Jamieson wanted to name the horse Paquet, but because the colt had never raced, there were reservations.

"I didn't want to put the name Paquet on him unless I thought really highly of him," says Jamieson. "We only changed his name three weeks ago. I wanted to honour Brian. Everybody knew Brian and you could never find anybody to say a bad word about Brian Paquet. He was always a class act and a friend to everybody. So, we changed the name to Paquet, and we got a win with him. It was pretty awesome."

What was going on inside Jamieson's head when the horse, Paquet won his debut race?

"I don't know if there was an emotional impact," he says. "It was more relief that I was right. He's a good horse and he proved it his first time. Don't get me wrong. He hasn't beaten anybody. He hasn't won anything yet, but so far so good for the namesake of Paquet."



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2024 SCHEDULE

2YO Colt PACE

leg	date	track
Gold Series		
1	Jul 5	WBSBS
2	Jul 15	WBSBS
MF	Aug 15	WBSBS
MC	Aug 15	WBSBS
4	Aug 31	WBSBS
5	Oct 3	WBSBS
SF	Oct 12	WBSBS

Grassroots Series

1	Jul 8	WBSBS
2	Jul 18	WBSBS
3	Aug 17	SARF
4	Aug 30	WBSBS
5	Sep 14	HNVR
RC	Sep 27	WBSBS
RF	Sep 28	WBSBS

Prospect Series

1	Jul 8	GRVRF
2	Jul 19	GRVRF
3A	Jul 28	DRES
3B	Aug 13	GEODF
4A	Aug 25	LEAM
4B	Sep 4	GRVRF
5A	Sep 17	FLMD
5B	Sep 29	FLMD
PF	Oct 11	LON

2YO Colt TROT

leg	date	track
Gold Series		
1	Jul 9	WBSBS
2	Jul 25	WBSBS
MF	Aug 5	WBSBS
MC	Aug 5	WBSBS
4	Sep 6	GRVRF
5	Sep 30	WBSBS
SF	Oct 12	WBSBS

Grassroots Series

1	Jul 12	WBSBS
2	Jul 30	WBSBS
3	Aug 9	KDF
4	Sep 3	WBSBS
5	Sep 13	GRVRF
RC	Sep 27	WBSBS
RF	Sep 28	WBSBS

Prospect Series

1	Jul 12	GRVRF
2	Jul 27	SARF
3A	Aug 9	KDF
3B	Aug 18	GEODF
4A	Aug 30	GRVRF
4B	Sep 7	HNVR
5A	Sep 21	FLMD
5B	Sep 29	FLMD
PF	Oct 11	LON

2YO Filly PACE

leg	date	track
Gold Series		
1	Jul 6	WBSBS
2	Jul 16	WBSBS
MF	Aug 15	WBSBS
MC	Aug 15	WBSBS
4	Aug 31	WBSBS
5	Oct 3	WBSBS
SF	Oct 12	WBSBS

Grassroots Series

1	Jul 9	WBSBS
2	Jul 19	KDF
3	Aug 17	WBSBS
4	Sep 1	CLNTN
5	Sep 17	WBSBS
RC	Sep 27	WBSBS
RF	Sep 28	WBSBS

Prospect Series

1	Jul 8	GRVRF
2	Jul 19	KDF
3A	Aug 7	GRVRF
3B	Aug 18	CLNTN
4A	Aug 25	LEAM
4B	Sep 9	GRVRF
5A	Sep 24	FLMD
5B	Oct 1	LON
PF	Oct 11	LON

3YO Colt PACE

leg	date	track
Gold Series		
1	May 25	WBSBS
2	Jun 23	RIDCF
MF	Jul 20	WBSBS
MC	Jul 20	WBSBS
4	Aug 16	WBSBS
5	Sep 26	WBSBS
SF	Oct 12	WBSBS

Grassroots Series

1	May 31	LON
2	Jun 18	WBSBS
3	Jul 19	WBSBS
4	Aug 5	GRVRF
5	Sep 16	WBSBS
RC	Sep 27	WBSBS
RF	Sep 28	WBSBS

Prospect Series

1A	May 15	LON
1B	Jun 1	HNVR
2A	Jun 16	CLNTN
2B	Jul 6	SARF
3	Jul 15	GRVRF
4A	Aug 5	DRES
4B	Aug 20	GEODF
5	Sep 12	FLMD
PF	Sep 27	GRVRF

3YO Colt TROT

leg	date	track
Gold Series		
1	May 25	WBSBS
2	Jun 27	WBSBS
MF	Jul 13	WBSBS
MC	Jul 13	WBSBS
4	Aug 14	GRVRF
5	Sep 30	WBSBS
SF	Oct 12	WBSBS

Grassroots Series

1	May 19	FLMD
2	Jul 1	DRES
3	Jul 15	WBSBS
4	Aug 20	WBSBS
5	Sep 12	WBSBS
RC	Sep 27	WBSBS
RF	Sep 28	WBSBS

Prospect Series

1A	May 16	FLMD
1B	Jun 2	GEODF
2A	Jun 21	KDF
2B	Jul 1	DRES
3	Jul 14	CLNTN
4A	Aug 11	GEODF
4B	Aug 26	GRVRF
5	Sep 15	LEAM
PF	Sep 27	GRVRF

3YO Filly PACE

leg	date	track
Gold Series		
1	May 25	WBSBS
2	Jun 23	RIDCF
MF	Jul 20	WBSBS
MC	Jul 20	WBSBS
4	Aug 23	WBSBS
5	Sep 26	WBSBS
SF	Oct 12	WBSBS

Grassroots Series

1	May 24	WBSBS
2	Jun 21	WBSBS
3	Aug 2	WBSBS
4	Aug 24	HNVR
5	Sep 13	WBSBS
RC	Sep 27	WBSBS
RF	Sep 28	WBSBS

Prospect Series

1A	May 15	LON
1B	May 30	FLMD
2A	Jun 11	GEODF
2B	Jun 23	CLNTN
3A	Jul 20	HNVR
3B	Aug 3	SARF
4	Aug 23	KDF
5	Sep 11	GRVRF
PF	Sep 27	GRVRF

2YO Filly Trot

leg	date	track
Gold Series		
1	Jul 11	WBSBS
2	Jul 25	WBSBS
MF	Aug 5	WBSBS
MC	Aug 5	WBSBS
4	Sep 6	GRVRF
5	Sep 30	WBSBS
SF	Oct 12	WBSBS

leg	date	track
Grassroots Series		
1	Jul 16	WBSBS
2	Jul 30	WBSBS
3	Aug 6	WBSBS
4	Sep 7	SARF
5	Sep 16	GRVRF
RC	Sep 27	WBSBS
RF	Sep 28	WBSBS

leg	date	track
Prospect Series		
1	Jul 12	GRVRF
2	Jul 23	GEODF
3A	Aug 2	GRVRF
3B	Aug 17	SARF
4A	Aug 30	GRVRF
4B	Sep 7	HNVR
5A	Sep 18	GRVRF
5B	Sep 28	FLMD
PF	Oct 11	LON

3YO Filly Trot

leg	date	track
Gold Series		
1	May 27	WBSBS
2	Jun 17	WBSBS
MF	Jul 6	WBSBS
MC	Jul 6	WBSBS
4	Aug 12	GRVRF
5	Sep 30	WBSBS
SF	Oct 12	WBSBS

leg	date	track
Grassroots Series		
1	May 30	WBSBS
2	Jun 20	WBSBS
3	Jul 7	CLNTN
4	Aug 11	GEODF
5	Sep 10	WBSBS
RC	Sep 27	WBSBS
RF	Sep 28	WBSBS

leg	date	track
Prospect Series		
1	May 26	FLMD
2A	Jun 9	DRES
2B	Jun 21	KDF
3A	Jun 30	GEODF
3B	Jul 21	CLNTN
4A	Aug 3	SARF
4B	Aug 23	KDF
5	Sep 15	LEAM
PF	Sep 27	GRVRF

PROSPECT FINALS

\$120,000 in purses

Grand River Raceway
3YO: September 27

The Raceway at WFD
2YO: October 11

GRASSROOTS CHAMPIONSHIPS

\$600,000 in purses

Woodbine Mohawk Park
September 28

SUPER FINALS

\$2.4 Million in purses

Woodbine Mohawk Park
October 12

ASG Age, Sex, Gait

GL Gold Series Leg

MC Gold Series
Mid-Season Consolation

MF Gold Series Mid-Season Final

PF Prospect Final

PL Prospect Series Leg

RD Race Date

RC Grassroots Consolation

RF Grassroots Championship

RS Grassroots Series Leg

RT Race Type

SF Super Final

TRCK Racetrack



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Gary Smith and Suitcase Smith, the Horse Named After Him



I had the pleasure of spending a few days with Gary Smith when Jim McKenny and I were at Saratoga last summer. Smith flew in from San Diego where he lives close to Del Mar racetrack. McKenny and Smith seem to have an endless artillery of wild stories, mostly about playing in the NHL and inevitably about heavy drinking before, during, and after games.

Smith had a particularly notorious career. He played at times for the Maple Leafs, the Oakland Seals, Vancouver Canucks, Chicago Black Hawks, Washington Capitals, the Minnesota North Stars, the Indianapolis Racers, and the Winnipeg Jets. His many travels resulted in his nickname, Suitcase Smith.

Often, between periods, Smith would take off all his equipment, shower, then redress. He's also famous for multiple forays with the puck out of his own zone towards the opponents' net in the hopes of becoming the first NHL goalie to score a goal. In fact, strictly because of that, the NHL created the "Gary Smith rule," which "prohibits goaltenders from skating past the centre red line to score a goal."

Smith's proximity to a major racetrack is no coincidence. He has always loved betting on the horses and has been an owner of many thoroughbreds. And now he can boast that a horse has been named after him.

Emma Berry is a horse owner and breeder in Newmarket, England. Her husband, John, is a trainer.

"I met her at the Breeders' Cup," says Smith. "She owns horses with a friend of mine named Bob Nastanovich."

"I was lucky enough to meet Gary Smith at Del Mar a few years ago," says Emma Berry. "He

just became an instant friend. We spent most of that week at the Breeders' Cup together. He's such a warm, lovely person and absolutely passionate about his racing. When Bob and I bred a foal together, we thought it would be lovely to name it after Gary. I love the nickname Gary 'Suitcase Smith.' It's fantastic and very amusing. This horse is by a classic winning stallion named Sixties Icon, who won the St Leger Stakes in England."

The 2-year-old is named Suitcase Smith, and the original Suitcase Smith knows that the colt is in good company.

"She's in Newmarket with all these great horses," he says. "The best European horses are born there and all train there. Godolphin has its stable there. Newmarket is all about the horses."



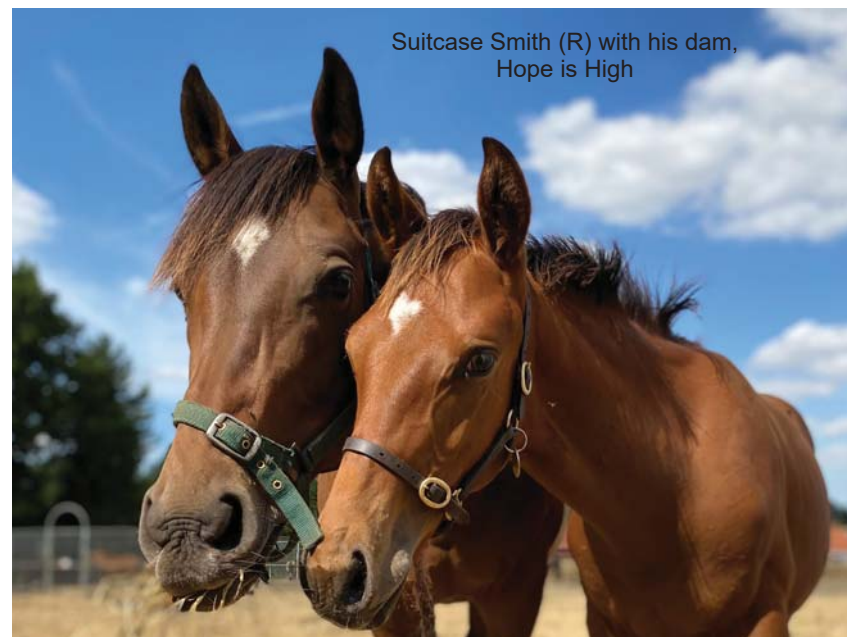
"I have become very familiar with Gary's hockey career," says Berry. "Obviously, he was a quirky and wonderful character in his sporting days. Hockey is not a great big sport in this part of the world, but in my days before I was a racing journalist, I was working on local papers, and I followed the local hockey team, and I covered their matches. So, I am familiar with the sport. We hope that great nickname lives on through this horse."

It's a terrific gift to Smith from Berry, but the former goaltender was the first to provide a present to the woman who bred his namesake.

"I gave her a replica of my Oakland Seals sweater," says Smith. "From the first team they had there. It had a circular crest on it with a seal in the middle. I gave that to her when she was leaving."

"Suitcase Smith is 2 now," says Berry. "I wouldn't anticipate him racing until maybe the end of the season – October-ish, or more likely next year at three. He's on the small side right now. He's certainly not as tall as Gary Smith. He's got a great attitude. Nothing fazes him. He's got a bold character."

And one thing you can count on – Smith will be betting on Suitcase Smith when he first runs. "Sure. She's a friend of mine," says Smith. "I hope she wins, and if I bet on him, I hope he wins."





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Saturday, October 12



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Elliott Logan was in a jubilant mood when we called him in mid-March. Mere hours before, his mare, Millennium Force had just given birth.

“She did this morning at 7:30,” said Logan. “She had her first foal, and it was so exciting! Just a really handsome little colt and he bounced right up there and was nursing in no time.”

As you read a little further, you will see that Millennium Force occupies an important space in the hearts of Logan and his family.

Logan is an American, who lives at the epicenter of thoroughbred racing – Lexington, Kentucky, but his connection to Canadian horse racing is multi-tiered.

“I got into thoroughbred horse racing with my father when I was 18 years old,” says Logan, who is 53. “The first horse we ever had was named Frank Lark, named after a gentleman who was from the town I grew up in. I always stayed active in it in a very small way and increased my stable size in the last few years. It’s a real passion of mine.”

Logan says it was about 10 years ago that he recognized the advantages of racing at Woodbine.

“I bought a filly named Almira Fawn,” he says. “I was introduced to Dave Cotey at Woodbine, and he trained Almira. That was the first horse I ever had at Woodbine.”

Almira Fawn broke her maiden on the 14th try, carrying Skye Chernetz to the winner’s circle on December 7, 2012, in a \$60,508 maiden special weight at 6 furlongs. Two months later, with Rosie Napravnik up, she won an allowance at the Fair Grounds. She finished her career with those 2 wins from 17 starts and \$128,189 earned.

“I met Marty Drexler probably four years ago and we started having some horses together,” continues Logan.

“I really enjoy racing up there. The people are so friendly there. Most of my horses are turf horses and with the two turf courses and the synthetic course, it really makes it advantageous for those types of horses.”

Logan’s stable is called TEC Racing. The “T” is for his daughter, Taylor, the “E” is for Elliott, and the “C” represents his wife Carol. And recently, TEC Racing has been reaping the benefit of the association with trainer, Drexler.

On January 28, Spirit Animal won a \$70,000 Starter Handicap at Gulfstream. The distance was a mile and an 8th and Edwin Gonzalez got the 8-year-old gelding to the wire a nose the best in 1:48.03, just a blink off the track record of 1:48.53.

“We claimed Spirit Animal last year in February for

Elliott Logan (L) with jockey Javier Castellano and Marty Drexler, trainer of Ninetyfour Expos



\$10,000,” says Logan. “The horse had been sprinting when we claimed him. Marty stretched him out to 7 ½ furlongs on the turf and the horse just won going away. He’s gone all the way from 6 ½, 7 furlongs to a mile and an eighth. He’s just the coolest horse to be around. He’s very relaxed, very laid back, goes on about his business without any drama at all.”

In the 13 months after being haltered by Drexler for \$10,000, Spirit Animal raced 9 times for TEC, with 5 wins and 4 seconds, cashing cheques worth \$168,000.

Then there’s the horse with the great name of Ninetyfour Expos. On March 1st at Gulfstream, the 4-year-old Ontario-bred held on under Javier Castellano for a neck victory in a \$35,000 claim race at a mile on the grass.

“We bought Ninetyfour Expos privately from one of the Fasig-Tipton digital sales,” says Logan. “He was mainly sprinting, and Marty said, ‘I think this horse could stretch out. I think he could relax on the lead.’ We found a nice race on the grass, and he led wire to wire.”

TEC Racing paid \$50,000 for Ninetyfour Expos and since that purchase in August of 2023, Ninetyfour Expos has won twice at Gulfstream, earning just over \$37,000.

Ninetyfour Expos was already named when Logan acquired him. The name is a shoutout to the 1994 Montreal Expos who made painful baseball history by winning the most games that season in the National League, but because of a players’ strike that split the season, the Expos did not qualify for the playoffs.

On March 8, Crosstown Shootout, another horse owned by Logan’s TEC Racing, scored at 6 ½ furlongs on the synthetic at Turfway Park. The jockey was Luan Machado for trainer Jesus Esquivel.

“Crosstown is a horse we claimed for \$12,500 last March,” says Logan. “We ended up shutting him down after the summer campaign. He won for me at Churchill, and then he came back a little bit sore from his race at Ellis Park. We turned him out for 90 days and he started really coming around and he’s won his last three races for me.”

That’s just another example of profitable racehorse

economics. Crosstown Shootout cost Logan \$12,500 in the claim of March 2023. In his subsequent 8 races, he won 4 times and banked around \$145,000. In that last race at Turfway, not only did TEC racing get the \$44,319 first place prize, but they also got paid \$25,000 as Crosstown Shootout was claimed from that heat. Making this even more interesting is the fact that Esquivel claimed Pine Knoll from that race for Logan.

“I claimed Pine Knoll specifically for Woodbine because he’s a 6 to 7 furlong turf specialist,” says Logan. “The turf racing here in Kentucky is 5.5. There is no 6 and no 6 ½ or 7 other than Kentucky Downs. Woodbine has the different turf courses there and he can run on the synthetic.”

At the top of this story, we referred to the new mother, Millennium Force, and the significant impact this mare has for Logan. The explanation comes when he is asked to cite the most exciting thing that has ever happened to him in horse racing.

“This happened about 4 years ago, during Covid,” recalls Logan. “It was a time when we were all at a low point. My daughter, Taylor was about 14 at the time and we went to Churchill Downs that day. We had two horses running in back-to-back races – a horse named Blunt Force and a horse named Millennium Force, and both horses won. It was the only time in my career that I ever won two races in a day period. And to have my daughter there with me to witness that was just a phenomenal day of racing.”

Logan told *Down The Stretch* that he will be bringing 15-20 horses to Woodbine this summer.

“It’s an honour to run up there. It’s a great place to be,” he says warmly.

And the summer of 2024 just might be a first for Elliott Logan.

“I have raced there for all this time, but I have never been to Woodbine,” he admits. “But I’m going this year. It’s on my list. I am going to be at Woodbine probably more than on one occasion this year to watch my horses run up there.”



There are many ways that *Down the Stretch* can be cued to select our Standardbred Owner of the Month. On March 8, in Mohawk's International Women's Day trot, Julie Walker gave Prince Of Sussex a patient drive, shooting up the rail for the win, after the favourite, Meadowbranch Noble went off-stride at the head of the stretch. The 5-year-old gelding won for the 23rd time in his 72nd race and he paid \$6.20 to win. More importantly, we saw that the owner is Gerard Demers, who shares the horse with Zacharie Lemay.

The 40-year-old Demers tells *Down The Stretch* he's been in the game pretty well all his life.

"I was 17 when I owned my first horse," he says. "It was named Star Islet. We did pretty good with him. We claimed him at Rideau for, I think, \$5,000 and he made almost \$50,000 that year."

Demers is very much a one-stop horse owner. He also trains and shoes his animals. About 2 years ago, he moved from the Ottawa based Rideau Carleton Raceway to Mohawk.

"I move back and forth," he says. "I try here, I go back to Rideau, but I think now we've got to stay here. Just because Rideau stopped for 3-4 months and the purses are really low, we've taken the decision to move here."

The consistent Prince Of Sussex has been an excellent addition to Demers' barn.

"We claimed him for \$20,000 at Mohawk in early January," he says. "So far it's working out well."

It sure is. Prince Of Sussex is one of those trotters that comes out every week and historically, picks up a cheque more than half the time. In the two months since he was claimed for Demers and Lemay, he has won twice and banked over \$14,000. Demers attributes the March 8 victory to good research from Julie Walker.

"He raced pretty good the week before, but he made a break," says Demers. "James MacDonald touched a wheel with him at the last turn, and that took us out of the race. Julie talked with James, and he told her the story. So, she gave him a perfect trip."

Could one make the argument that Julie Walker is a better driver than James MacDonald?

Demers laughs.

"Well, that night, yes."

(It should be pointed out that Julie Walker's record on Standardbred Canada shows 12 wins through very occasional assignments in a 14-year sample. MacDonald, as of this essay, has over 3,600 driving wins.)

That does, however lead us into the discussion of lady



drivers in harness racing. On the thoroughbred side, we have witnessed great success by Emma-Jayne Wilson, Chantal Sutherland, Rosie Napravnik and more recently, the explosive rookie year of Sofia Vives. The harness side doesn't seem to offer the same opportunities for lady drivers.

"It is changing," points out Demers. "We never used to see one, but there's more lady drivers every year, like Marie-Claude Auger, Jessie Turenne, Natasha Day, and Julie Walker. When I was young, there was just one woman driver – Elisabeth Jansen, and I think she was the only one who was driving. Now you've got way more than before – not enough, though."

Demers makes the point that women drivers can only be good for the sport.

"It will bring more people and inspire more girls to decide to go into the business," he says, "because they will see that a woman is able to drive."

Demers is asked to remember some of the better horses he has owned.

"I had HP Patriot who won the big race at Trois Rivieres in Quebec about 6 six years ago," he says.

It was HP Patriot's 23rd career race on September 4. The purse for 3-year-old pacers in the Cup D'Éleveurs was \$65,000. With Guy Gagnon driving, HP Patriot was parked for more than half the race, but, even so, powered to the lead in mid-stretch and won by a widening 2 lengths in 1:55. Demers had HP Patriot in his stable for 161 of the horse's 196 races. HP Patriot won 33 times for Demers.

"I have a nice filly, Hit The Bank," continues Demers. "She finished 4th in the Super Final last year."

That was the night of October 13 at Mohawk with \$300,000 on the table for 2-year-old trotters. Hit The Bank was driven by Sylvain Filion and the 4th place result was worth \$21,600. Hit The Bank won just once in 9 starts as a 2-year-old, but collected \$72,972 – an excellent return, considering she was purchased for \$10,000 at the Ontario Select Yearling sales.

"I had the old trotter, Derf Hanover," says Demers "He did pretty good for us. He made almost \$110,000 last year

at Mohawk."

Demers acquired Derf Hanover in March of 2022. Since then, the horse has raced over 70 times, generating 11 wins and multiple in-the-money finishes.

Demers mentions that he prefers trotters to pacers.

"I get along pretty good with trotters," he says. "I shoe all my horses, so I can help them a little bit more than a pacer. You need to try to help them to stay on-stride."

Demers has had modest experience as a harness driver. Standardbred Canada shows he's been in 293 races with 19 wins. He was just 3 for 49 in 2022.

"I don't do it too often," he admits. "I'm not a really good driver."

Deferring to the more skilled reinspeople is a good idea. Obviously anytime you can get James MacDonald, you're in good shape.

"He's the best," says Demers. "We always try to go with him. Trevor Henry does lots of driving for me at Flamboro. I really like Trevor. He's really good with trotters too. And on the B tracks, I use Scott Coulter and he's doing a really good job with my horses."

Demers referred to Flamboro, so we asked him what his best horse is at that track. He chuckles.

"Right now, my best horse at Flamboro is an \$8,000 claimer. Her name is Timewaitsonnoone. She's got 7 wins in 9 starts."

Scott Coulter drove Timewaitsonnoone to all 7 of those wins, which occurred between January 13 and March 9. Going back to September of 2023, Timewaitsonnoone has piled up 16 wins from 26 starts, banking about \$25,000.

Money matters when you own racehorses. Demers tells us a wonderful story about a horse he owned that paid boxcars.

"I bought a cheap horse with my dad a long time ago," he recalls. "His name was Hammer Rainbow. We were racing at Connaught Park and my dad asked me to try him at Rideau Carleton. It was way tougher there and we drew the 8-hole. We won the race and he paid \$240 to win. My mother was really happy because she had \$2 to win."

ODDITIES & ENTITIES

There is almost always something unique and irresistible about a Jessica Hallett racing image

Another example of photographer Jessica Hallett's amazing talent to catch an image at the exact moment. Note how none of the 6 horses have a hoof on the ground.



Another Jessica Hallett creation. We know it's a harness horse, but is it a pacer or trotter?



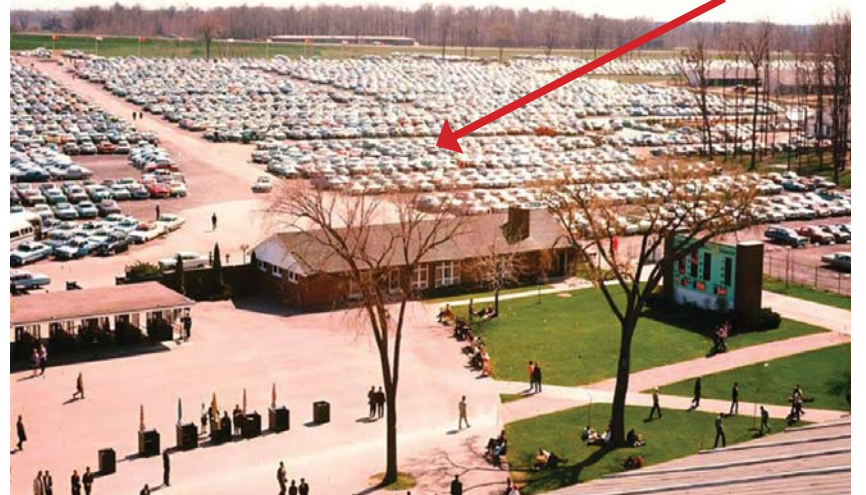
No one told Beyonce it's better to have both legs inside the wheels



When the finish line...is finished



This is from many years ago at Fort Erie. What do you suppose all those things in the parking lot are?



Races to eat by:

If you bet your horses based on how tasty they sound, there were a couple of days in March that would stuff your belly. On Wednesday, March 27, at Gulfstream, Sesame Seed Bagel carried Tyler Gaffalione to the winner's circle, returning a mouthwatering \$49.20. That same day, the main course in the 3rd race at Turf Paradise was Quail, a 3-year-old, who broke his maiden by 2 lengths and paid \$6.60. After that delectable bird, dessert was desired and the 14th race from Dover Downs on March 26 was ideal as Filled Donut driven by Tim Tetrick led Shesafrostedflame to the wire and paid \$3.60. Bagels, small fowl, and donuts filled and frosted – betting the races can satisfy your hunger pains.

DOWN THE STRETCH PODCAST

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Episode 211, February 11:

This week we have the Sam F Davis Stakes from Tampa Bay, **James MacDonald** with another great night at Mohawk and a thoughtful little video posted by Woodbine for Black History Month. Trainer **Barbara Anderson-Heads** talks about her terrific mare, Infinite Patience and wonders why her 19 for 25 record might not be good enough for a Sovereign Award. **Keith McCalmont** of NYRA explains why the Belmont Stakes will be run at Saratoga this June. Jockey **Katie Davis** tells us how thrilled she is to be repping the U.S.A. in the International Jockeys Challenge in Saudi Arabia and we have a race from Yonkers that had two horses with nearly identical names and it reminded us of the funniest all-time race call.

Episode 212, February 17:

We've got a handful of Canadian victories at U.S. tracks – **Bill Tharrenos** sending out a pair of winners on the same day at Gulfstream, Prince of Wales Champion **Velocitor** scoring and paying at the Fair Grounds, and **CamHaven Farms** sending out a winner that paid off at 27-1 at the Fair Grounds. We break down the Sovereign Award category for Outstanding Male Sprinter, trying to get **Bob Tiller** to compare **Patches O'Houlihan** to **Pink Lloyd**, but Tiller just won't go there. COSA President **Bill O'Donnell** explains the relatively new rule at Mohawk about breaking stride – it's not required very often, but it happened last Thursday night. Two-time NBA MVP **Nicolai Jokic** explains his love of harness racing, and when **Koufax** won a race at the Fair Grounds, we got curious about other horses named after sports stars.

Episode 213, February 24:

We have the stretch calls of 3 Kentucky Derby preps – The Risen Star from the Fair Grounds, the Hyacinth from Japan and the Sunland Derby. Harness Driver, **Tyler Borth** is winning in bunches and took time among his wins to speak with us. **Marty Drexler** is playing the claim game at Gulfstream and he's playing it very well. He's on the phone with **Down The Stretch**. And horse owner, **Darryl Ezra** helps us push the envelope on good taste with some of the naughtiest names inflicted on thoroughbreds.

Episode 215, March 11:

- + 5 winners at Gulfstream by **Marty Drexler**
- + **Steven Chircop** winning at Penn National
- + 4 Kentucky Derby preps
- + **Julie Walker** winning the International Women's Day Trot
- + **Jennifer Buck** on her Off-Track Worker Sovereign
- + **Michelle Armata**, Groom of the Year
- + **Jessica Hallett** winning at the Dan Patch Awards for a photograph published in Down The Stretch
- + We remember colourful race caller **Larry Lederman** with a compilation of his more entertaining calls
- + **Tony Beaton** blowing up the tote board
- + **Mark MacDonell** snapping his 0-19 driving streak
- + Fair Ground race caller **John Dooley** funneling his best **Guns N Roses**

Episode 216, March 18:

A lot of CanCon here:

- + King's Plate Champ, **Paramount Prince** winning at Gulfstream
- + **Chiefswood Stables** sends out **Waskesiu** to take the Florida Oaks
- + Ontario-bred **Candy Overload** was sweet in the Big Daddy Stakes at Turfway
- + **Kazushi Kimura** rides another winner at Santa Anita
- + **Steven Chircop** scores at Charles Town
- + A 4-bagger for driver **Travis Cullen**
- + A great first impression for **Carter Gimblett** at Flamboro
- + **Mark Casse** breaks down the 8 Sovereign Award categories in which horse he trained are nominated
- + **Nicholas Barnsdale** phones in from the Cheltenham Festival
- + And the notorious NHL goalie, **Gary Smith** has a horse named after him.

Episode 217, March 25:

We've got a pair of Kentucky Derby preps as we go to the Fair Grounds and Turfway Park. A lot of **Marty Drexler** content as he keeps winning at Gulfstream and a little **Steven Chircop** in the mix. They had a draw for the Mohawk Million and we talk with lucky slot owners, **Brad Grant** and Tara Hills Stud's **Dave Heffering**. Trainer **Josie Carroll** has 3 horses in 2 Sovereign Award categories and we got her to assess their chances. And on March 17, how good was a bet on a horse named Shamrock?

ON AIR

DOWN THE STRETCH



A Podcast with Peter Gross