

DOWN THE STRETCH

CANADA'S MOST INFORMATIVE AND ENTERTAINING HORSE RACING NEWSPAPER

Breeders' Cup

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THE EDITOR WEIGHS IN



There's a respected journalistic theory that the best stories are about people. This is the final issue of *Down The Stretch* for 2023, our 140th since we began 16 years ago, and it has always been a goal to make stories about somebody as often as possible. This issue is a good example of that. We have the incredibly moving story of Cody Dorman on pages 14-15. This story will be made into a movie one day because reality wrote what Hollywood could never describe – a resilient disabled boy who falls in love with a horse named after him and then the horse just wins and wins – Cody's Wish pulled off the rare stunt of winning the Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile 2 years.

Emma-Jayne Wilson, Rachel Slevinsky and Desean Bynoe are all fascinating people and talented athletes.

What they also have in common is that each was hurt in a horse racing related fall in November. Jockeys are the toughest of all professional contestants (see page 10).

Santino Di Paola is a guy worth writing about. He has won a Sovereign Award for his media work. He's a trainer and owner and last month he and his York Tech Racing principals cashed in a \$48,000 Super High 5 when their own horse, Little Teddy shocked at huge odds. Di Paola and York Tech are this issue's Thoroughbred Owners of the Month (page 20).

Then there's Natasha Day. Her numbers against the men at Mohawk are quite modest, but that could change next year. One night last month, Day won a race at Western Fair, jumped in her car, made the 8th at Mohawk, and won that race. We document that on page 22. The

horse in question was named Taylor's Credit and Day shares ownership with Doug Millard. Millard has been in the standardbred game for a very long time, and we celebrate his contribution to the game by naming him the Standardbred Owner of the Month (page 21).

We would never miss the chance to talk about Sandy Hawley, this country's greatest jockey. On page 12 is a replay of an article we stumbled across – Hawley chronicling his Kentucky Derby rides for TV Guide (TV Guide, much like Eureka Downs, Tropical Park, Greenwood, and Garden City Racetrack has been defunct for over 25 years).

Horses are people too – well that's what we hear from many in the backstretch. Check out the great picture of Sintra and Jody Jamieson getting props from the fans (page 18). This is part of the story of the wonderful pacer, Sintra and his retirement party.

Great jockeys, trainers, and horses – we've got lots of them in this issue. On page 4-5 we have a complete wrap of the Breeders' Cup races at Santa Anita. As you turn to page 6, you will find the most recent Stakes races from Woodbine, which include riding triumphs from Kazushi Kimura, Patrick Husbands, Rafael Hernandez, Eswan Flores, Leo Salles, Sahin Civaci, and Ryan Munger.

This issue also features a pair of extremely talented people. Dave Briggs has won countless awards in Canada and the U.S. for his writing, and a recent article he wrote for Harness Racing Update resonated on social media. We've republished it on page 17. I was shocked recently to learn that Jessica Hallett is just 24. She's a force in harness racing as an owner, as a journalist and photographer and creative artist. Her work is sprinkled throughout this paper on pages 8, 12 and 23.

We have had a cartoon and a full page of Oddities & Entities in every issue. This month's cartoon (page 9) imagines what Santa has probably never experienced – a horse on his lap with a long list of requests. And once again, we have filled a full page (23) with unusual, provocative, and amusing ingredients to demonstrate the uniqueness of horse racing.

And before I wish everyone the best of the holiday season, I want to give props to two people who help me churn this thing out. Gord Steventon is our layout artist and if you find the pictures and words here attractive, he's the reason why. Susan Nash is our proofreader, the person who takes copy without periods, sentences that don't end, and past tense verbs when present tense is required, and straightens it all out so that the reader doesn't think "WTF?!"

Please enjoy issue 140 and best wishes for the new year!

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Breeders' Cup 2023:

There were 14 Breeders' Cup races at Santa Anita on the first weekend of November. On Friday, November 3, everyone at the kids' table got to take part, with 5 races, all for 2-year-olds.

\$1,000,000 Juvenile Turf Sprint:

A field of 12 blistered along for 5 furlongs, and Tom Marquand had Big Evs in striking position from the start. The Irish-bred colt was 2nd until the field turned for home and then he surged to the top and repelled the late move of 23-1 shot, Valiant Force to win by ½ a length in :55.31. Big Evs is trained by Michael Appleby and owned by RP Racing, and he paid \$8.40 to win.

\$2,000,000 Juvenile Fillies:

A dozen raced in this one and for your information, Just FYI was the best, leading at the half and persevering to survive by a neck in 1:344.58 for the mile and a 16th. Junior Alvarado was the jockey for trainer Bill Mott and owner George Krikorian. Just FYI paid \$16.

\$1,000,000 Juvenile Fillies Turf:

It would have been hard to justify throwing out Hard to Justify from this 14-horse field. The 2-year-old filly had won both of her first 2 races and is trained by Eclipse Award winner, Chad Brown. She proved the best, stalking the leader most of the way, then powering home to win by ½ a length in 1:34.42 for the mile on the grass. Owned by Wise Racing, Hard to Justify paid a handsome \$20.20.

\$2,000,000 Juvenile Colts and Geldings:

Nine rookies left the gate for this one, but it was Fierceness, overlooked at 16-1, who crushed by over 6 lengths. John Velazquez had Fierceness 2nd to the head of the stretch, took the lead, then shrugged off Muth who looked live as they turned for home, but Fierceness was just too much. Fierceness is trained by Todd Pletcher and owned by Repole Stable, and he paid \$35 to win.

\$1,000,000 Juvenile Colts and Geldings Turf:

Unquestionable had the answer against 10 rivals going a mile on the grass. With Ryan Moore calling the shots, the French-bred colt went 5th at the half to first at the wire in 1:33.65, getting there 1 ½ lengths the best. Aidan O'Brien is the trainer, and with his 2nd win in 6 starts, Unquestionable paid \$5 to win.

Now we go on to Saturday and 9 huge races:

\$1,000,000 Mile:



The amazing story of Cody's Wish had its closing chapter, and if Hollywood doesn't jump all over this one, there's no point in ever going to the movies again. Cody's Wish, now a 5-year-old, is named after Cody Dorman, the charismatic teenager with a rare genetic disorder. Cody, the boy met Cody, the horse, three years ago and there was palpable energy between them. The horse came into the \$1,000,000 Breeders' Cup Mile with 10 wins in 15 races, including a conquest of this race last year. Although he left the gate last, Cody's Wish, under Junior Alvarado began a dramatic move down the backstretch and came into the turn for home as a huge threat to the longtime leader, National Treasure. The two threw it down all the to the wire, with Cody's Wish winning the photo by a nose in 1:35.97. Trained by Bill Mott for Godolphin, Cody's Wish is now retired to stallion duties, after paying \$3.60 to win.

\$2,000,000 Fillies and Mares Turf:



They went a mile and a quarter on the downhill course and the favourite in the 12-horse field was the 4-year-old Inspiral ridden by Frankie Dettori. That pair was 8th after half a mile, but Dettori knew he had plenty of horse under him. The pair came into the stretch from 9th but with great momentum, passed rivals aggressively and surged dramatically just before the wire to win by a neck in 1:59.06. This was Inspiral's 9th win in 13 races. She is trained by John Gosden and owned by Cheveley Park Stud. The successful bettors got \$7 on the win ticket.

\$1 Million Filly and Mare Sprint:



This field had 9 ladies going 7 furlongs and there was no drama at the finish as Goodnight Olive, the 5-year-old mare ridden by Irad Ortiz was just too much for the others. Ortiz had her 4th early, but once she made her move, the others were running for minor shares. Goodnight Olive galloped to the lead before the field turned for home and she pranced to the wire a relaxed 3 lengths the best in

1:22.97. Goodnight Olive repeated in this race. Chad Brown trains for First Row Partners and Team Hanley. Goodnight Olive has won 9 of 12, which explains the \$4.20 win price.

\$2,000,000 Mile:



The Canadian interest here was Shirl's Speight, who is trained by Roger Attfield and is a 6-year-old son of Perfect Shirl who won the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Turf in 2011. With John Velazquez aboard, Shirl's Speight never factored, was 4th in mid-stretch, but tired to finish 8. The winner was Master of the Seas who gave racing fans the most spectacular finish of the weekend. Jockey William Buick had Master of the Seas no better than 11th and about 8-horse wide coming into the stretch, but the pair found an extraordinary gear in the final 8th, rocketing past rivals and hitting the wire a split-second better than Mawj. The photo gave it to Master of the Seas by a nose. The time of 1:32.45 was less than a second off the course record of 1:41.69. Master of the Seas is a 5-year-old Irish-bred gelding who has won half his 16 races. The trainer is Charles Appleby, the owner is Godolphin, and the win price was \$8.60.

\$2,000,000 Distaff:



A field of 9 contested this one at a mile and an 8th and Florent Geroux gave Idiomatic a perfect ride, stalking from 2nd for the first 6 furlongs, taking over the lead at the top of the stretch and finding the wire a half-length better than Randomized. Like Cody's Wish, Idiomatic boasts Curlin as her daddy. She is trained by Brad Cox and owned by Juddmonte. This 4-year-old filly will be a factor in Eclipse Horse of the Year voting. She improved to 8 for 9 and in 2023, Idiomatic won Stakes races at Turfway, Churchill, Delaware, Saratoga, Keeneland and Santa Antia. The win price was \$5.80.

\$4,000,000 Turf:



The key to this race was the perfect ride that Ryan Moore gave the winner, Auguste Rodin. If the 3-year-old colt appeared out of it down the backstretch when he was 8th about 7 lengths from the leader, Moore was not worried. He stuck to the inside and as the field of 11 turned for home, Auguste Rodin scooted up the inside, apparently passing most of his rivals in a matter of strides. Auguste Rodin got to the wire a winner by ¾ of a length in 2:24.30 for the mile and a half. The trainer is Aidan O'Brien. Auguste Rodin won for the 7th time in his 10th start and paid \$7.

\$6,000,000 Classic:

This may not have been the greatest field to contest the Classic. Not one of the Triple Crown winners (Mage, National Treasure, Arcangelo) was in this race. There were a dozen contenders, and it was the favourite, White Abarrio who carried Irad Ortiz to a convincing win. Ortiz had White Abarrio close the entire race, took the lead



with just over a quarter mile to go and won by a length over longshot, Derma Sotogake. The time of 2:02.87 was spectacularly off the course record of 1:57.60 set 43 years ago by Spectacular Bid. To give White Abarrio credit though, he puts this one on his resume next to the Whitney Stakes he won at Saratoga in August. White Abarrio is a 4-year-old colt trained by Richard Dutrow and owned by C2 Racing and La Milagrosa Stable. The bettors who picked him got paid \$7.20.

\$1 Million Turf Sprint:

Breeders' Cup officials made the interesting decision to make the Classic the 3rd last Stakes on the card, probably to encourage exotic bets starting with the biggest race. After 7 sub-\$10 payouts, the Turf Sprint delivered some bigger prices and a winner with a name worth laughing about. There was a wild scramble for the lead in the final 16th, and jockey Geraldo Corrales came driving up the inside with Nobals, getting to the wire a neck better than Big Invasion, who won the Nearctic Stakes a month ago at



Woodbine. Nobals, who is, of course, a gelding, won for the 10th time in 18 starts. He is trained by Larry Rivelli and owned by Patricia's Hope. The win price was \$26 and the exactor for \$1 paid \$115.10.

\$1 Million Sprint:



A sensational day of racing ended with a 6-furlong dash for cash. Elite Power, ridden by Irad Ortiz, came from 7th at the half to surge past everyone in front of him, winning decisively by 1 ½ lengths in 1:08.34. Elite Power is a 5-year-old horse, trained by Bill Mott and owned by Juddmonte. He was the 3rd horse that Saturday bred by Curlin to win a Breeders' Cup race. With his 9th win in 13 races, Elite Power paid \$5.40.

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Woodbine Stakes

November 10, \$100,000 Lake Ontario Stakes:



A field of seven 3-year-old colts and geldings went a mile and a 16th. Rapid Test under Kazushi Kimura was bet down to 76 cents to the dollar but got involved too late. The winner was Jim's Hope who benefited from an excellent ride by Sahin Civaci. Civaci had Jim's Hope close in 3rd most of the way, drove for the lead as the field turned for home, and repelled Rapid Test late to prevail by a length and a half in 1:45.25. Jim's Hope is trained by Paul Buttigieg and the Buttigieg Training Centre shares ownership with Jimmy Goodman. With his 2nd win in 15 tries, Jim's Hope paid \$14.80.

\$100,000 Ashbridges Bay Stakes:

The fillies got their chance at a mile and a 16th, and just 6 took part here. Fashionably Fab ridden by Patrick Husbands stalked the pace from 2nd until the stretch where she took the lead and flew away from the rest to win by a widening



6 ½ lengths. The time was 1:43.44, about 4 lengths faster than the boys did the race before. Fashionably Fab is owned by the Terra Racing Stable, is trained by Kevin Attard and with her 5th win in 10 starts paid \$5.60.

November 11, \$182,000 Maple Leaf Stakes:

One of the few races of the year run at a mile and a quarter, this one had a dozen starters and Rafael Hernandez gave Millie Girl a perfectly timed trip. The 5-year-old mare was 10th after 6 furlongs, but Hernandez moved his mount to the outside with momentum and Millie Girl was full of energy in the final 8th getting to the wire safe by 2 lengths in



2:03.53. Millie Girl is trained by Catherine Day Phillips for Kingsfield Racing Stable and Braconcrest Inc. Millie Girl improved to 5 for 10 and paid \$4.50. This was Hernandez's 4th win on the card, all of them with female horses.

\$212,500 Bessarabian Stakes:

A full field of 13 fillies and mares travelled 7 furlongs and it was the favourite, Loyalty who did it the best, unwinding from 7th down the backstretch, gaining



momentum with a 5-wide move into the stretch and passing rivals late to get up by 1 ½ lengths in 1:22.27. Loyalty is a 4-year-old filly trained by Josei Carroll and owned by Gainesway Stable and LNJ Foxwood. This was Loyalty's 7th career win from just 11 starts and the bettors who maintained their allegiance to the winner cashed \$8.10 on the win ticket.

November 25, \$250,000 Coronation Futurity:



There were two important and generous Stakes races this Saturday. A field of ten 2-year-olds lined up for the 9-furlong Coronation Futurity, which often creates the winter book favourite for the next summer's King's Plate. The bettors' choice at 8-5 was Piper's Factor under Kazushi Kimura, but Eswan Flores fired Babbo right to the top from the start and cut out acceptable fractions of :48.77, 1:13.78 and 1:38.94 for the mile. In the stretch, Babbo had plenty left and a concerted chase by Piper's Factor was unable to prevent Babbo from winning by 2 ½ lengths in 1:52.06. Babbo is trained by Sid Attard and owned by Lou Tucci, and \$12.20 was a nice win price on a horse who has now won 3 in a row.

\$250,000 Princess Elizabeth Stakes:

The rookie girls, 9 of them, went a mile and a 16th and this one went right down to the wire. Late in the stretch, War Painter (Patrick Husbands) appeared to have the race in the bag, but Leo Salles had Inudation motoring along the rail and the photograph gave the win to Inudation by a head. This capped a brilliant day by trainers named Attard. It was Kevin Attard's 2nd win. Steve Attard also won twice, and Sid won the previous race. Inudation is



owned by Bill and Al Ulwelling and by breaking her maiden on the 4th try, she paid \$26.60.

December 2, \$150,000 Clarendon Stakes:

There were seven 2-year-old colts and geldings going 6 furlongs, and Sahin Civaci continued his break-out year with a savvy ride on Frac Dancer. Civaci put the colt on the lead from the start, carved out decent splits of :22.56 and :45.31 and found the wire just in time over a late driving Midnight Mascot (Patrick Husbands). Frac Dancer is



trained by Mike De Paulo for Phoenix Racing. This was his 2nd win in 2 races, and he returned \$8.10.

\$150,000 Shady Well Stakes:

The rookie girls also went 6 furlongs and first-timer, Shamans Girl was last by about 6 lengths as the field of 6 turned for home. But jockey Ryan Munger took her to the outside and she had a furious kick, passing all rivals and winning by over 3 ½ lengths in the very average time of 1:11.53. The winning trainer is Harold Ladouceur for



Stronach Stables. Shamans Girl is a daughter of Stronach's 2015 Queen's Plate champion Shaman Ghost, so even though it was her first career race, maybe she should have been respected a little more by the bettors – Shamans Girl paid \$49.30 to win.



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Wonderful artwork of Cody's Wish defeating National Treasure by a nose in the Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile



Another brilliant image from Jessica Hallett. If you brush oat-flavoured syrup on your helmet, you can keep your rival behind you!



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OUCH! Three Jockeys Talk About Their Racing Injuries

Emma-Jayne Wilson and daughters Grace and Avery



Not since the gladiators fought the lions in ancient Rome has there been a sport in which individuals put their bodies in such peril every day. In November, three jockeys at Woodbine suffered physical harm in racing related incidents. Veteran rider Emma-Jayne Wilson has endured several serious injuries, and one more was added to her resumé on November 2. It was a maiden race. Wilson was aboard a 2-year-old colt named Adesso who fell during the backstretch run and sent his jockey hard to the track. The horse could not be saved. If Emma-Jayne doesn't recall all the details of this incident, considering how she fell, it's understandable.

"My horse went down, and in the fall, I was knocked out," she says. "Luckily it was fast, and my injury was just restricted to the concussion."

In football games, concussed athletes are ushered into a blue tent for protocol. That doesn't happen at the track, but being the elite athlete that Wilson is, she interacts with professionals trained for such injuries.

"I've got a really great team of sports medicine doctors that specialize in concussion care," says Wilson. "I was working closely with them, and we have managed a 'return to play' protocol based on my symptoms and my status. Everything was geared towards the return and recovery. I got my clearance in the last week of November, and I was able to take entries. Brain injuries are serious and it's not something to ignore."

Wilson and her wife, Laura Trotter have twin 6 ½ year-old girls, Grace and Avery. They're not babies anymore. To what extent do they know how mommy was hurt?

"I would have to lean towards Laura," says Wilson. "I was in the hospital for a couple of days on observation. We don't lie. We explain to them what happened. They knew

that I had gotten hurt in a horse race and that I wasn't quite myself for a while. They're happy to see that I'm back to normal. One of my daughters said to me the other day that she's pretty excited that I won't be at home when she goes to bed. I know that sounds terrible, but it was more about the fact that it's back to normal. Not so much that I won't be there as much."

In the film, *Lethal Weapon*, Danny Glover's police officer character famously says,

"I'm getting too old for this shit."

Considering that Wilson has been hurt before, is there



Desean Bynoe

Mary Jane Sibbitt Photo

an immediate timeline that dictates the end of her career?

"The very first day that I started riding thoroughbreds and wanted to be a jockey, I was very much aware of the risks and the potential for injury," she says. "The danger has always been the same so I'm not about to change my

outlook and I'm not about to change my career. I love the game. I love the sport. I'm very excited to be able to get back on the horses."

Desean Bynoe, just 20 years old and an apprentice, was in his first year at Woodbine and doing ok – almost 200 assignments and 16 wins. On Sunday November 19, the 10th and final race never went off. Bynoe's horse reared up and pinned him in the gate, and because the ambulance had to take Bynoe to the hospital, the race was cancelled – a horse race can't be run without an attending ambulance.

"I was in the 6-hole, and it was a 14-horse field, and my horse hadn't raced in over a year," says Bynoe. "As soon as the last horse was loading, another horse gave a bit of trouble and my horse just reacted off of him. It happened so quickly. He just flipped over and didn't give me any time to get off. I fell back in the gate and my foot hooked up and pretty much it was broken right there. I didn't have time to escape. Immediately I couldn't feel my leg, although I was in shock. I knew something was wrong and then the pain just kicked in and I looked at my foot, it was leaning the other direction."

As bad as this was for Bynoe, it was also unfortunate for his agent, Neal Wilson. Wilson also books for David Moran, who earlier this year, also broke his leg.

Bynoe won't be earning anything for Wilson for the next few months.

"The doctors told me an estimate between 3 to 6 months," says Bynoe about a possible return. "But they did say that I have youth on my side so maybe it'll be a bit faster. It's time off for me and the season is coming to an end."

Bynoe is the nephew of Patrick Husbands, which tells us he's got some good bloodlines for his chosen occupation.

"We get along well," says Bynoe. "In the jocks' room, I sit next to my uncle Patrick, and he talks to me a lot

about breeding and stuff. We're pretty close."

As for his modest numbers in his rookie year at the big track, Bynoe considers 2023 to be a very nice start for himself.

"Just showing up at Woodbine, not anybody knowing



Rachel Slevinsky

of me, I think it's pretty good," he says. "I'm pretty happy and I'm looking forward to next year to see how it goes. I'm willing to put in the work and go harder."

Rachel Slevinsky is another apprentice jockey. On November 26 in the 4th race, she was aboard a 3-year-old named Daddy Send Money, a colt racing for the first time. Halfway through the race, the horse went down and Slevinsky was thrown hard to the tapeta.

"To be honest, I don't remember what happened," says Slevinsky. "But based off the replay and what people have told me, it looked like his hind end locked up. and there was nothing much either of us could have done. It just happened that we both went down."

Because she was unconscious for a few minutes, Slevinsky isn't certain how she fell, though the pain gives her some evidence.

"The way my body feels, I definitely hit my left hip and I hit my left side, my shoulder and my head pretty hard," she says. "And my right rib cage also hurts. I feel like when he rolled over his foot hit me in the ribs. But I'm very grateful to be able to walk away from something like that."

Slevinsky was immediately taken to the hospital.

"I was unresponsive for a couple of minutes. I'm very grateful for the gate crew. They rushed to me right away and they stayed with me until the paramedics got there. Once they did, then I started responding and answered all their questions."

Slevinsky has special gratitude for her agent Brandon

Fairlie.

"Brandon watches all of our races," she says. "So, when he saw me go down, he immediately started calling to figure out what was happening and where I was. When he learned I had been taken to the Etobicoke Hospital, he and his girlfriend drove there to meet me. His girlfriend, Emma Harris, is a lovely human being. I don't know what it is about her presence, but she made me feel so calm and comforted. They definitely took care of me. I don't have much family around here, so it was very nice to have them be there."

Slevinsky was hoping to be back racing as soon as possible. Before her accident, she'd put up some decent numbers – 14 wins from 150 rides.

"I think I've had a pretty damn good year," she says. "Despite coming here and not knowing anybody and nobody even knowing what I look like, you know, let alone what I look like on a horse. The fact that I've had 14 wins this year means a lot to me that people gave me a chance and I was able to prove myself, coming out of the middle of nowhere out west. A lot of my long shots still hit the board. My horses were running well. I was riding smart races. I made some good connections. I've realized this past week that I definitely had a lot more people on my side than I thought I did. So, I think it was a very great year."

Wilson, Bynoe, Slevinsky – three skilled athletes, undeterred by the danger of their sport. There's that age-old saying, "If you fall off a horse, get right back on." Clearly that was first uttered by a jockey.

Mammas don't let your babies grow up to be jockeys

(parody of Don't let your babies grow up to be Cowboys)

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So Mammas don't let your babies grow up to be jockeys
 Let them be goalies or slide on a luge
 Or run with the bulls if that's what they might choose
 Mammas don't let your babies grow up to be jockeys
 A blink of the eye and the baby fat's gone
 And they're always at work before dawn

Mammas don't let your daughters grow up to be jockeys
 You spent all those years saying drink all your milk
 Then they go break their bones, though they look good in silks
 Mammas don't let your babies grow up to be jockeys
 They'll always break shoulders and fingers and ribs
 And insist it does not hurt at all.

Jockeys get thrown to the ground, but bounce back with a grin
 Though their elbows and knees might complain when they're
 safely tucked in
 Jockeys are rarely discouraged when their mounts don't come
 in
 And though trailing by eight in the stretch they believe they
 can win

So Mammas don't let your babies grow up to be jockeys
 Let them be passers like Brett Farve or Brady
 Or bareknuckle boxers they'll get through that safely
 Mammas don't let your babies grow up to be jockeys
 The ground gets much harder the older you get
 And the fans only care for their bets



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Fire

Early November a fire broke out in the backstretch of Tioga Downs, a harness track in upstate New York. The evidence indicates the fire was set on purpose and some 31 horses perished. The following is a post by Jessica Hallett shortly after the disaster.

We Stand With Tioga Downs

TIOGA STRONG



Last night five horsemen tucked their horses into bed after dinner, turned off the lights to the barn and closed up for the night. This morning they received a wake up call that haunts horsemen across the world.

I believe in total there were 31 horses that lost their lives today.

They are not numbers and statistics, they were not valued by purse earnings or win counts. They were family. They had names and nicknames. They had careers and futures. They had loving homes and loved ones.

I don't want to see anymore photos or videos of the tragedy across Facebook. I want the posts of the horsemen that rushed in to go viral. I want the stories of the horses and who they were to be at the top of the page. I want the headlines to read about the horseman community coming

together in the wake of an unthinkable tragedy.

Put the horses and the horsemen's names at the forefront. I want to remember their names, not the name of the sick individual who caused this. He does not deserve his name in ink, he does not deserve a spotlight or any notoriety.

These horsemen were just small town people from a secluded town known as Nichols, New York. If you have ever been there, the place is nothing but corn fields and the beautiful racetrack of Tioga Downs. Some of these horsemen are the same horsemen that lost their livelihoods when Pompano Park shut down and they were just getting back on their feet. Some have families of their own. Some only had one horse, but that horse was their world.

Keep them in your thoughts and prayers and consider donating to the cause in any way you can.

This is a first person account by legendary jockey, Sandy Hawley of his experiences riding in the Kentucky Derby. It appeared in the May 4, 1991 edition of the TV Guide.



Running for the Roses

Sandy Hawley, veteran of six Derbies, recalls his most memorable mounts

by SANDY HAWLEY

[In riding more than 5800 winners, Canadian jockey Sandy Hawley has won 10 riding titles at Toronto's Woodbine race track, captured top winner in North America four times and has won one Eclipse Award as outstanding jockey. Hawley is a member of Canada's Racing Hall of Fame and was nominated this year for the U.S. Hall.—Ed.]

The most nervous I've ever been before a race was the first time I rode in the Kentucky Derby. [This year's race, the 117th edition, is May 4 on ABC and CTV.] It was May 5, 1979. I was 29, and I'd already been a full-time jockey for 10 years, primarily on the Ontario circuit. During winters, I also rode at tracks around the U.S., and in 1978 I was encouraged to try the tough Southern California riders' colony. Immediately, good things started happening for me

Above: Hawley aboard Partez, a long shot that finished third in the '81 Derby; right: when he's riding out of California, Hawley often moonlights as an off-ice official at L.A. Kings games

at Santa Anita and Hollywood Park—and the best thing of all was that I wound up sitting on a California thoroughbred named Golden Act in the Kentucky Derby.

Golden Act had been listed in an early Derby-week morning line at 10 to 1, but a lot of people thought he had a better chance to win than that—he was bet down on the day of the race. I obviously liked the horse's chances, too.

In the post parade, "My Old Kentucky Home" was played. That will definitely give you goose bumps, even if you were born and raised in Oshawa, Ont., like I was. It's a combination of getting a lump in your throat, exhilaration and butterflies. After all, it is horse racing's Super Bowl.

My main concern with Golden Act was that he was lazy. He was very talented, but you had to get after him to make him live up to his potential. And, in the Derby, where huge fields (16 horses or more) aren't unusual, Golden Act had the disadvantage of being a late runner. With all of those horses ahead of you, coming from behind is tough.

Racing luck was not with us that day. A non-winner named Great Redeemer came out running from the No. 2 post—right into Golden Act as we left the gate. In the rush to gain position, other horses caromed off us, too, before things got sorted out in the stretch drive. I got all over Golden Act; he responded and made his late charge. We did well to finish third, the winner being a memorable monster named Spectacular Bid, who turned out to be one of the greatest thoroughbreds ever. (Later, with Spectacular Bid going for the Triple Crown, we beat him by a nose in the Belmont Stakes,

but an upstart named Coastal that hadn't run in the other Triple Crown races beat us both.)

The next time I rode in the Derby, in 1981, the race became known as the Stampede for the Roses because of its field of 21 horses. My mount, Partez, was another California product. Partez was a long shot, but had some speed, so we stayed fairly close to the pace-setters to try to avoid traffic problems in that cavalry charge. We made a huge move to go to the lead (I'll never forget that!), and I really thought at that point there was no stopping us. But a favorite, Pleasant Colony, came on late with his own big run to win it. We finished third.

I rode in the Derby again in 1983 (when a Canadian product, Sunny's Halo, won), '84, '85 and '87. The most competitive horse I had in those Derbies was in '84 with Fall Time, which I'd ridden since the year before, when he was California's top two-year-old. We finished fourth, but should have finished second behind Swale. An extremely fractious horse called Gate Dancer bumped us hard through the stretch drive. Gate Dancer was disqualified as a result—one of the few times that a number has been taken down in a Kentucky Derby.



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From the
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Best for the Holidays



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Cody

Cody Dorman died on Sunday, November 5. He and his family were flying home after being guests of the Breeders' Cup at Santa Anita.

His parents, Kelly and Leslie posted this statement:

"We are heartbroken to share the news that our beloved Cody suffered a medical event on our trip home to



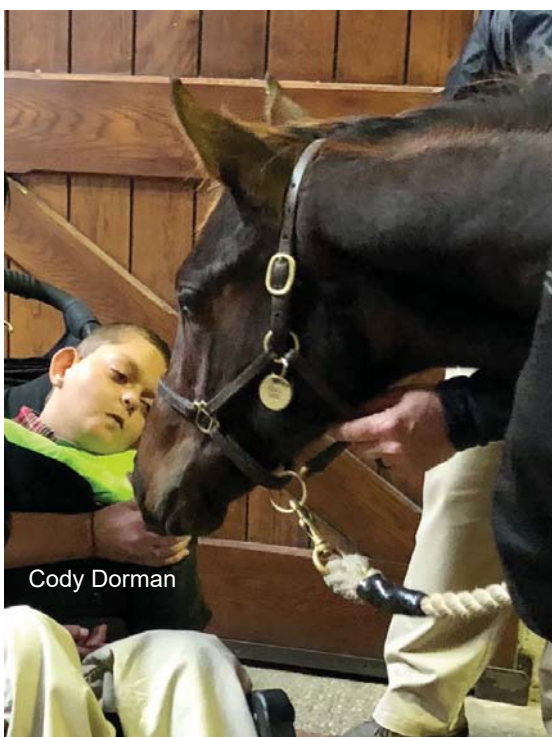
Trainer Bill Mott with Cody Dorman on Breeders' Cup Day

Kentucky yesterday and he has passed away. Cody watched his best friend, Cody's Wish, display his usual perseverance and toughness in winning a second Breeders' Cup. Those are the same characteristics Cody has shown time and time again for the 18 years we were blessed to have him".

We're not calling Cody's death tragic. Anyone following the script knows how often the young man conquered the world around him and how his accomplishments overshadowed his disability. His family always understood the bitter reality of the terrible disease that gripped him. Cody was born with Wolf-Hirschhorn syndrome. It affects about 1 in 30,000. In Cody's case, the symptoms were severe.

"He's had dozens of surgeries ranging from minor stuff to open heart surgery," his dad, Kelly told *Down The Stretch* a year ago.

"He's had a couple of strokes. I can't put a number on how many seizures he's had. It's well into the thousands. He's been on a feeding tube since he was 6 months old. He's non-verbal, but he does have a tablet to communicate



Cody Dorman

with. He doesn't give up. He's got a lot of fight in him."

It was about five years ago that Cody, through the Make-A-Wish Foundation, was invited to visit Gainsborough Farm, owned by Godolphin. No one could have predicted what would ensue between the boy and a baby colt so young it didn't even have a name.

Danny Mulvihill is the farm manager for Gainsborough. When bringing out foals to meet children, he knows to exercise caution.



"We picked this particular foal because he was quiet and laid back," said Mulvihill. "We wanted to get the foal close to Cody in his wheelchair. He was able to put his head in Cody's lap and you could see the connection immediately. Cody relaxed and his demeanor changed."

Dad Kelly was amazed at what he saw, and he made a prediction that was incredibly accurate.

"When that horse did that, I told Danny, 'If that horse has half the heart that Cody has, he's going to do great things.'"

The Dorman family made another trip to Gainsborough Farm. The second visit was arranged because Cody had

This emotionally uplifting event moved everyone who witnessed it – so much so, that the Gainsborough people asked the Dorman family if it was okay to name the horse Cody's Wish.

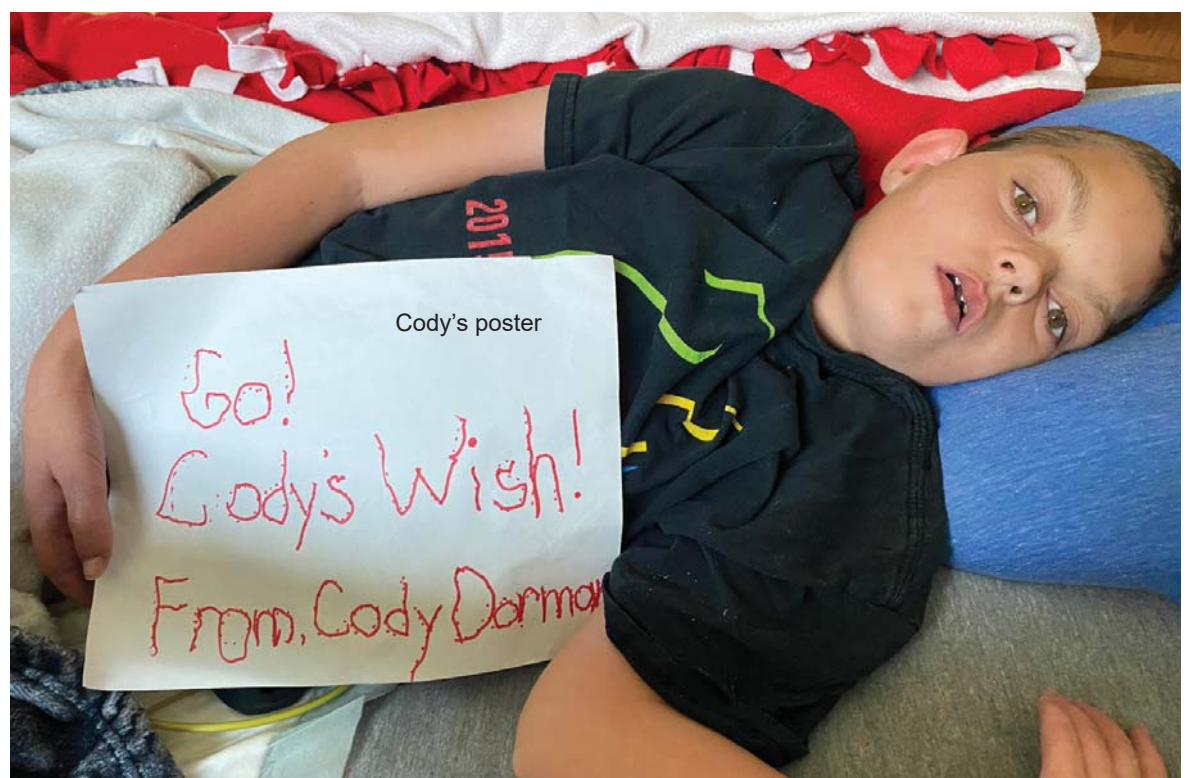
"I nearly fell over," said Kelly. "I never dreamed they would do something like that."

So now Cody Dorman had something special, and something thrilling in his life. After all, Cody's Wish is a son of Curlin, a stallion who produces great racehorses.



The first 3 races for Cody's Wish were not bad. He was in Maiden Special Weights, the most generous races for horses seeking a first win. He finished 3rd in each of those first 3 races. But Cody knew what was necessary to get Cody's Wish into the winner's circle.

Cody had an ingenious method of getting his message across. With a special instrument attached to his forehead, he could identify words and phrases on his computer screen that were then converted to audio. After the 3rd in-the-money finish for Cody's Wish, Cody told his parents that he needed to be at the track to see the horse run. That would



fallen into a depressed funk. When the boy was reunited with the horse, something rare happened.

Cody laughed.

"There had been maybe 5 times in his entire life that he laughed out loud," said Kelly. "And after this, he was a completely different kid. It's like a switch flipped on."

be the only way Cody's Wish would win.

So, his dad, Kelly, his mom, Leslie and his sister, Kylie joined Cody on a trip to Churchill Downs. This was the 4th race for Cody's Wish, another Maiden Special Weight and this one carried a purse of \$120,000 – \$69,400 to the winner.



Cody watched the Forego Stakes with the #5 saddle cloth from the previous race by Cody's Wish, who was also #5 in the Forego



Cody Dorman with mom, Leslie, dad Kelly and sister Kylie with Cody's Wish

And Cody was right. Cody's Wish was ridden by Joel Rosario and went off at 30 cents to the dollar. Early in the mile race, Cody's Wish was 5th, about 3 lengths from the leader. Around the turn, he went 3-wide and came into the stretch with a 2-length lead. With a final 8th in :12.50, Cody's Wish romped to the finish line an authoritative winner.

After that win, Cody's Wish raced twice more as a 2-year-old and won each time, both in allowance company. Cody issued predictions before each of those races, each time predicting a first-place finish for his namesake.

I know what you're thinking. Of course, the kid is going to predict a win for Cody's Wish. But – the horse's first race as a 3-year-old was a \$100,000 Stakes event at Tampa Bay on March 12, 2022. That morning, the Dormans woke up to find their son nervous and agitated.

"He's not ready," said Cody. "He's going to run second."

Cody's Wish got off to his typical start – he was "off a bit slow" according to the charts. Jockey Luis Saez asked for a surge as the field turned for home, but Scalding, ridden by Javier Castellano was a little bit stronger in the stretch and Cody's Wish came 2nd by a head.

After that, Cody's Wish was nothing less than sensational. He put together a head-spinning 6-race win streak, all in Stakes. He won the Grade 3 Westchester Stakes at Belmont, then the Hanshin Stakes at Churchill Downs, then the Grade 1 Forego Stakes at Saratoga. In the Forego, Cody's Wish, under Junior Alvarado, went off at 8-1, but in the final 8th, he gobbled up the 3-5 favourite, Jackie's Warrior, and powered to the finish line a winner by 1 1/2 lengths in 1:20.95, just .45 off the record at Saratoga for 7 furlongs.

By this time, horse racing across America was recognizing Cody Dorman and his great story. Cody and his family were invited by the Breeders' Cup to be their guests at the biggest races of 2022. Cody focused on his computer screen to talk about this great moment in his life.

"I got a letter from Drew Fleming, the President and CEO of the Breeders' Cup inviting me to the races on Friday and Saturday," Cody told *Down The Stretch*.

As he tended to do in all his races, Cody's Wish made his fans wonder early. In his first Breeders' Cup race, he looked out of it in the first quarter mile, as many as 12 lengths behind the early leader, Pipeline.

"I was not worried," said Cody.

He didn't need to be. As the field started to curve into the far turn, Cody's Wish was circling his opponents, gobbling them up like so many carrots. Cyberknife, under Florent Geroux led as they straightened for home, but Cody's Wish was wearing that one down from the outside. Just before the wire, Cody's Wish got his nose in front and won by a head in 1:35.33.

"Oh! The wish has come true! That one's for you Cody!" bellowed track announcer, Larry Collmus.

"We were in the winner's circle," said Cody. "The people at Keeneland took me there so

I could see better from the rail. It was very loud and exciting."

In 2023, Cody's Wish was now a 4-year-old. At some point, it was determined this would be his last year on the racetrack. He went off at 72 cents to the dollar in the \$750,000 Churchill Downs Stakes on May 6. Though last under Alvarado at the half of this 7-furlong test, Cody did his thing, rocketing past rivals and surging to the finish line an authoritative winner by 4 3/4 lengths. The time for the distance was 1:21.17, less than a second off the course record that has stood for over 11 years.

Next up was the Metropolitan Handicap at a mile, with a purse of \$1,000,000 at Belmont Park. Alvarado had Cody's Wish 8th at the half but first at the wire by 3 1/4 lengths. Cody's Wish paid just \$3.40. He would lose his next race. It was the Whitney Stakes at Saratoga, and though he was a well-beaten 3rd at 2-5, trainer Bill Mott understood that the horse's comfort level was at a mile or less. The Whitney was a mile and an 8th. So, on October 1 at Belmont, Cody's Wish rebounded with a confident 1 1/2 length win in the Vosburgh Stakes at 7 furlongs. He was ready for his encore and his swan song.

Cody's Wish went off at 4-5 as defending champion in the Breeders' Cup Big Ass Fans Mile. Cody and his family were once again guests with a great view right at the finish line. It's as if Cody's Wish had read the Hollywood script for his final race. Typically, he was 6th of 7 down the backstretch, as many as 6 lengths behind National Treasure, the Preakness Champion. Once again, Cody's Wish found his best gear and came into the stretch within a length of National Treasure. In a heart-pounding stretch run, Cody's Wish appeared to get a head in front with maybe 1/16th to go. But National Treasure fought back, and it was excruciatingly close at the finish line.

Larry Collmus nailed the call.

"Coming down to the line. Fighting back National Treasure. Oh, Cody's Wish! Cody's Wish! I think he won by a nose at the wire. Thank you Cody and thank you Cody's Wish!"

In the winner's circle, Kelly embraced his son and tried to control his emotions.

"When you put Cody and Cody's Wish and the good Lord in something like this," said Kelly. "I'm sorry I can't talk and cry at the same time. How can you write something like this?"

Down The Stretch was hoping to ask Cody what his plans were knowing that Cody's Wish would never run again. Sadly, we never got that opportunity.

We know this is a story of a horse that elevated the life of a disabled young man. Was it also the story of a young man communicating winning karma to a talented thoroughbred? We're going with that.

As for the relationship between a champion racehorse and a brave, resilient young man, Cody told us in a previous story about their remarkable connection.

"I have a special bond with Cody's Wish that I think no one can understand. I am always happy when I get to see him, and it makes me smile when people talk about us and when I see that it makes them happy too."

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Only a dope would think harness racing doesn't need serious change

Nearly four years after the horse doping indictments — and nearly three decades after I started covering the sport — shockingly little has changed to improve harness racing.

Originally published on Harness Racing Update by Dave Briggs

Close to 30 years after I started covering harness racing, I don't love it any less. But I am growing tired — tired of seeing something I love continue to decline due, mostly, to those in charge refusing to embrace much-needed change. I'm not sure if the lack of movement is incompetence or laziness or lack of foresight or some wild belief things are just fine — perhaps all of the above. But if watching some 20 people go to jail for a collective total of nearly 60 years at last count (see box on pg. 6) for horse doping wasn't the wake-up call the sport needed to undergo wholesale change, I'm not sure anything will do the trick.

It will be four years ago in March that the FBI and the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York announced the first indictments for what is straight up cheating and horse abuse. The outrage was short-lived and has long since dissipated. Since that time, little-to-nothing has changed to address the scourge of performance-enhancing drugs in a sport clearly in the cross-hairs of animal rights forces that haven't the slightest interest in appreciating the subtle differences between standardbred and thoroughbred racing. On that score, harness racing is just lucky few people know this particular brand of horse racing exists.

Worse, harness racing has done little to advance what should be its number one rule: Protect the welfare of the horses at all costs. Even after one of the worst scandals imaginable — where the FBI had to be called in to nab people so unscrupulous they harmed horses they purported to love for personal gain — harness racing still can't even agree about what constitutes an effective drug testing program from state to state let alone figure out how to properly police itself.

God forbid an epic scandal involving animal welfare brings action and reason to the system. First, the emphasis and funding must shift more to the only proven method of catching cheaters — surveillance.

Second, despite the relative ineffectiveness of drug testing, regulators need to also sharply increase fines for the most performance-enhancing of the drugs — the ones that are Class 1 or 2 that should almost never be in a horse for any reason. At the same time, regulators need to stop handing out fines and suspensions for positives triggered by nanogram levels of therapeutic medications designed to keep horses healthy, not cheat. At one billionth of a gram, how could an antihistamine possibly give a horse an advantage over others? Why should a trainer be punished for trying to help a horse breathe? There's also the significant issue of contamination that needs sound reasoning from regulators that should know by now that a rash of positives for the same drug from the same paddock wasn't a group of trainers getting together to try to cheat. But then, logic is not a quality often held by regulators that are, all too frequently, bureaucrats more focused on making few waves and keeping their sweet government gig than doing their jobs to protect horses and the betting public.

Little wonder John Campbell has, sadly, only made limited progress in his quest to bring much-needed universal

rules to the sport despite a huge effort. I feel deeply for him. If he can't get it done, I can't think of anyone that can. In March, it will be seven years since Campbell became president and CEO of the Hambletonian Society and began trying to bring reason to the madness. But since harness racing is largely a series of warlords and fiefdoms, there just isn't a compelling reason for, say, the Pennsylvania regulators to get on the same page with the ones in New York or New Jersey or Ohio or anywhere else. They will just worry about their own states, thank you very much. The betterment of the sport be damned.

That was one of the promising parts about the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Authority (HISA) at least on paper — it was a step toward horse racing governing itself nationwide. Yet, instead of working from the inside to soften the most egregious parts of HISA, what does harness racing do? Its own governing body tries to bring HISA down. You can't make this up. What does the public see? That harness racing isn't interested in integrity nor the safety of its horses and participants. That's not true, of course, but try explaining that to someone that doesn't know a standardbred from a salamander. And public perception does matter, especially for a sport that desperately needs some public to like it for it to have a future.

Speaking of warlords and fiefdoms, the racetracks don't do the sport any favors either by protecting their own turf at the expense of others. I guess, like the regulators, one can't expect the tracks to be concerned about how others are doing. Except, it is extremely short-sighted in the face of declining foal numbers, field sizes, participants, handle and attendance — all of which threaten to swamp the entire boat. But then harness racing sees the big picture about as well as Mr. Magoo. Post time drag is a clear example. While the sport in its individual two-minute action segments is as compelling as ever, an entire card of racing has become a bloated, completely unwatchable, falsehood that serves to aggravate customers and participants alike in the supposed aim of handle growth. While other sports have actively worked to decrease the length of their events, harness racing is bucking that trend, extending its programs to five and six hours and expecting its paying customers — already a dying breed — to just shrug and go along with a perpetual bold-faced lie. How does anyone think this is a sound business policy? I'm all about driving handle which is good for bettors and participants and tracks alike. Trouble is, there's no actual science to back up the oft-heard contention that dragging leads to greater handle; no proof of a direct correlation between the number of minutes past zero minutes to post and the amount bet. Sure, sure some tracks tried not dragging, briefly, and handle dropped. But there are simply too many factors at play influencing handle to determine that was the sole reason for the decline, particularly when tracks have accustomed their customers to expect a drag. My contention is that if all major tracks educated their bettors and committed long-term to start rolling the gate when the clock hits zero, in due course those that want to lay a bet would find a way to do so. Otherwise, we'll see how much is bet in a few

years when there are few betting customers left. Dragging makes even less sense when most major tracks have fat purses not from handle, but either the legislated largesse of casinos or significant government handouts. Which brings us to the warlords. If The Meadowlands' owner Jeff Gural and the United States Trotting Association's chairperson Joe Faraldo and president Russell Williams truly had the best interest of the sport at heart, they would all put aside petty differences and figure out how to come together to lead. As it stands, it certainly appears Faraldo and Williams advocate the status quo — which is baffling given the state the sport is in. Meanwhile, Gural, while certainly well-intentioned to personally fund an attempt to eradicate cheaters, could be less reactionary and more thoughtful before acting. Case in point, I'm torn whether banning people from The Meadowlands that supposedly purchased performance-enhancing drugs will really help without proof said products were actually given to horses. Where Gural had it right was helping to fund surveillance that led to the horse doping indictments. The wire taps were invaluable and telling and gutting. Horsepeople — the vast majority of whom are the honest, decent folks that made me fall in love with harness racing nearly three decades ago — simply have to do more to stop other people from robbing both them and the sport. Owners can do their part by giving horses to the most honest of trainers and insisting on the utmost integrity and well-being for their horses. That includes saving a percentage of purse winnings to provide decent after-care for all the horses they own. Everyone should demand better from leadership that for far too long has done far too little to protect horses, level the playing field and advance the collective interests of harness racing. If leadership doesn't act, get new leaders. Frankly, four years after the indictments, how harness racing hasn't found a way to do better is sickening and pathetic and troubling. Surely, I can't be the only one tired of it.

SENTENCES IN HORSE DOPING CASES

Dr. Seth Fishman — 11 years
Lisa Giannelli — 3 ½ years
Jorge Navarro — 5 years
Chris Oakes — 3 years
Dr. Louis Grasso — 4 years and 2 months
Dr. Kristian Rhein — 3 years
Jason Servis — 4 years
Rick Dane Jr. — 2 ½ years
Marcos Zulueta — 3 years and 9 months
Michael Kegley Jr. — 2 ½ years
Richard Banca — 2 ½ years
Rene Allard — 2 ¼ years
Dr. Alexander Chan — 2 ½ years
Michael Tannuzzo — 2 ¼ years
Thomas Guido — 1 2/3 years
Scott Mangini — 1 ½ years
Scott Robinson — 1 ½ years
Jordan Fishman — 1 ¼ years
Dr. Erica Garcia — 10 months
Donato Polisenio — 4 months

Sintra's Golden Years



Sintra Page 18

Peoples' choice, Sintra loved it when Jody Jamieson took a popular victory lap

NewImage Media Photo

Every racehorse that competes even once for us deserves a dignified and comfortable retirement. A select few merit a special sendoff when their competitive days are done. The 10-year-old Sintra falls into that category and on Saturday night, November 18, he was honoured with a retirement ceremony at Mohawk.

Sintra answered the call over a 148-race career that spanned 9 years. He won 48 times and accumulated \$1,691,168 while posting a career best mile in 1:47.2.

Veteran driver Jody Jamieson was in the bike for 85 of Sintra's races.

"He is class personified," says Jamieson. "That horse taught me a lot about driving a horse and looking after a good horse. He was a special horse."

Jamieson steered Sintra to 6 consecutive years when the horse was just starting his sophomore year.

"As a 2-year-old, he broke down," says Jamieson. "When he came back, he went into the care of Dave

Menary, and I was Dave's main driver at the time. When I qualified that horse, I didn't know that much about him, but he qualified in :55.2, :26 flat at the end and I said to David, 'Holy crap! This is a real horse' and he said, 'Yeah, I know, he's a monster.' After his maiden, we went right to a Gold at London. When I moved him, he went by them like they were standing still up the backside. He went :27 flat or something



Sintra and Jamieson winning another

like that in the 3rd quarter which is vicious at London. He just jogged. After that he was an amazing horse. "

Dave Menary bought into Sintra early in the horse's career.

"He was sent to me by Brad Gray," says Menary. "Mike Guerrero and I bought into the horse with Brad. We didn't get off to a very good start. He broke a pastern in the Battle of Waterloo Elimination. We had to wait, but he did right by us. That made him lightly staked at 3, which led to his longevity and having his career win at 4."

As a 3-year-old in 2016, Sintra won 8 of 16. His most impressive score came when he was timed in 1:49.3 while winning a \$105,000 OSS Gold at Mohawk. He improved dramatically as a 4-year-old.

Both Jamieson and Menary point to Sintra's win at the Meadowlands in the \$240,000 Graduate Series final on July 8, 2017, as his greatest race. Sintra went off at 6-5, circled the field after the half and won by

4 lengths in that lifetime mark of 1:47.2.

That was the best start of his life,” says Jamieson. “I was 2nd over and I came off cover and I actually touched Yannick Gingra’s wheel, and he put a little step in, and I thought he was going to run. But this horse has so much class that he overcame me and paced to the wire. Dave was peeved at me because I didn’t push him a little in the stretch. He came home in :26.2. I am sure he could have come home in :25.4 and broken the world record at the time if I had pushed him. He was just bionic that night.”

Menary tries to dial back the idea that there was any angry confrontation after Sintra’s Graduate win.

“You don’t get paid for going fast,” says Menary. “I might have still been drinking back then, but I’m a little bit older and wiser now. We didn’t get paid any more. He won by a lot that night with his lifetime mark.”

The principals agree it was at the Meadowlands that Sintra provided his most scintillating work, but less than 2 months later, he was huge, winning the

\$615,000 Canadian Pacing Derby in 1:48.1, throwing a :26.1 final quarter at his opponents and paying over 12-1. Jamieson admits even he was a little surprised.

“He raced ok in his elimination,” says Jamieson. “But I sat on the back of Rockin Ron and couldn’t get past him. Then we drew the 9-hole in the final and I was told to make sure I gave him a shot, so I crossed right over to the 4-hole almost immediately and I didn’t come off the rail and he won.”

“It was unbelievable to win a race like that on his home turf,” adds Menary.

Sintra’s owners cashed \$307,500 for that Derby win and though Sintra would race 114 more times, he achieved success only in Preferred and Open races. There was one notable exception to that. In the summer of 2022, Anthony MacDonald of the stable purchased the horse. He took Sintra to the Charlottetown Driving Park for the \$100,000 Gold Cup and Saucer, the most important race of the year on Prince Edward Island. This meant a ton to MacDonald who is from the island and Sintra was much the best, winning by

5 relaxed lengths. Track Announcer Vance Cameron provided audio that surely MacDonald will play over and over.

“Anthony MacDonald, your dream comes true,” bellowed Cameron. “Sintra has won the Gold Cup and Saucer. They equal the track record – 1:50 and 1. Wow!”

“I’m glad that somebody else was able to enjoy him and that Anthony MacDonald was able to get his Gold Cup and Saucer win,” says Menary. “I told him when he bought him, that he’d have a home for life at my place. When it came time, Anthony rang me up and asked if I was still interested and I said ‘definitely.’ I’m just glad to see he went out his last start as a winner.”

Sintra’s last race was at Grand River Raceway on September 25. Strangely, in this \$9,000 pace, he was not the favourite. But with Scott Coulter steering, Sintra overhauled the 3-5 choice and pulled away for a 2-length win in 1:53.3. It was his 48th win in his 148th and final race.

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Santino Di Paola is quite the hyphenate. He's a trainer-owner-photographer-video journalist. In 2018, his photo image won a Sovereign Award as best horse racing picture. Two years later, his video love letter to the sport, *Dear Horse Racing*, won in the Audio/Visual Broadcast category. Di Paola claims he is not a gambler, but on November 11, he combined with 5 others to win \$48,000 in a Super High 5 bet.

Di Paola's parents are York Tech Racing Stable, and it was on Remembrance Day that the 2-year-old filly, Little Teddy was entered in just her 2nd race. In her debut, she finished 7th of 8th for jockey Alexander Marti. The Racing Form note says she "made no impression." Based on that, the bettors ignored her, and Little Teddy went off at 48-1 in the 6 ½ furlong test. The race was the 11th that day (on the 11th day of the 11th month, she had post 11) and there was a significant carryover in the Super High 5, a bet requiring you to select the first 5 horses in a race. There was also a mandatory payoff promised for that bet.

"I'm pretty sure every ownership in that race was going to bet their horse and try and hit the High 5," said Di Paola. "So, six of us decided to take a shot. There was Mario Giorgio, a new client of mine, my mom Raffaella, my dad Carmen, my brother Joey, my sister Teresa, and myself."

Rules of horse racing ordain that owners can bet their horse, but only in the win position, so the Di Paola cartel "keyed" Little Teddy on top in the Super High 5 with every other horse in the next 4 positions. At 20 cents a bet, that investment covered 8,975 combinations at a cost of \$1,585.

Little Teddy started well, then Marti allowed the filly to settle in mid-pack. As the field turned for home, Little Teddy was circling 3-wide and she assumed the lead in mid-stretch, galloping happily to the wire to win by half a length.

"We were hooting and hollering for the win down the lane," said Di Paola. "And then we said, Holy crap, she won! It ends up paying \$48,000. So, we split that between 6 people."

Little Teddy paid \$98.10 to win. *Down The Stretch* pointed out that if the syndicate had wagered their \$1,585 on the nose, instead of in the exotic, they would have cashed about \$60,000.

"I normally bet \$20 to win on my horses, just for good luck," says Di Paola. "So, I cashed almost \$1,000 on that."

No matter how you cut it, it was a great day at the track for our horse owner. Di Paola recalls the first horse he



Santino, Raffaella and Carmen Di Paola



ever owned.

"Oddly enough, his named was Santino D.," he says. "I owned 50% of him and worked on him as a baby. I actually galloped him myself when I was 14 or 15. We had a 5/8^{ths} of a mile track at our old farm. I only fell off once. Santino D. got a few seconds, but then he had an accident in the gate where he acted up. He actually ended up breaking a bar in the gate and he had some back issues after that. So, we just retired him as a riding horse. He's still on our farm."

Di Paola has had a number of partnerships with horses, simply to spread the expenses around.

"It's an expensive game," he says. "It costs you \$40,000 a year to keep a horse at Woodbine from the start of the season to the end of the season."

One of the first racehorses to really excite Di Paola was D's Wando, who raced as a 2-year-old in 2009.

"He's now one of our studs," says Di Paulo. "He was second in a few stakes and was picked by many to win the 2010 Queen's Plate when the Queen came. That's kind of when I caught the bug of wanting to be a trainer – just that road to the Plate."

D's Wando won just twice in his 24-race career. As a 2-year-old, he won a couple of allowance races and finished 2009 with a nice 3rd in the Coronation Futurity. D's Wando started 2010 by finishing 2nd under Emma-Jayne Wilson in the Woodstock Stakes and he followed that with a 3rd in the Queenston Stakes. The Plate that year was won by Big Red Mike, who found the finish line more than 20 lengths better than D's Wando who finished last in the 13-horse field.

Then there's Santino's Honour, who was named after Santino and started 40 times between 2004 and 2010. He did his best work as a 3, 4 and 5-year old, winning 3 times

and piling up almost \$250,000 during that period.

"He was a very honest horse, and you could always cheer for him," says Di Paola. "Just a hard knocking horse and that really made me want to come to the track and watch the workouts in the morning on the weekends."

Di Paola and York Tech also have a nice horse called Bode's Topsy, now a 5-year-old.

"We got offered a lot of money for him a few years back," he says. "Those people wanted to run him in a Grade One in Arlington. We turned them down to just keep him in Canada and he's done well for us. Another horse that York Tech has is Enchant Me. We bought him for \$10,000 at the CTHS sale. I think he's made over \$200,000 American."

York Tech owns about 50 horses these days with as many as 14 entered in races. Di Paola says that the recent upset win by Little Teddy ranks high on his list of racetrack thrills.

"Little Teddy was pretty spectacular because it hasn't been such a great season for myself," he says. "I mean, I think we're 55% top four and 30% top three, so it hasn't been a disaster, but she was amazing. And to have everybody in on it, everybody cheering hard – that was a great moment."

And, of course, *Down The Stretch* asked Di Paola what keeps him in the sport.

"You have to love the animal," he says warmly, "We just acquired a stud called Serve the King. So now I'm looking forward to having his babies and raising them. The hope is always alive. It's a really tough game for sure, but to get a good horse that takes you to different levels and maybe around North America – that's the ultimate goal."



presented by WEG



Elsewhere in this paper you will find a story about harness driver Natasha Day picking up wins at 2 tracks on the same night. Her 2nd win came with an 8-year-old pacer named Taylor's Credit that she co-owns with Doug Millard. That made us think, "Mr. Millard should be our next Standardbred Owner of the Month!"

It was always in the cards for Millard, now 84, to be in the horse racing game, a place he has occupied for more than 50 years.

"I grew up with horses," Millard says. "We farmed with horses. I always loved them, and I ended up later in life in the race business."

Millard tells *Down The Stretch* that the first horse he ever bought was Susie Adios. We looked it up on Standardbred Canada. Susie Adios was born in 1966, and though the information from that era is not complete, it appears she won 15 times and made over \$83,000.

"When I bought her, she was an aged mare and I raced her for a year or so," adds Millard. "Then I bred her, but the first real yearling that I bought out of a sale was in 1973 with a horse by the name of Thoretta Hanover."

Millard can trace his involvement in the sport back to the 70s and he was blessed with having 2 wonderful 4-legged animals.

"The most sensational one that I was involved in was Elegant Image," he says. "Jerry Van Boekel, Mark Hyatt and Steve Condren and I owned her first and I ended up buying all of them out. She was a world champion and at the time, she was as good a mare as there was in the world. She made \$955,000. Back in the 90s that was pretty good money. I kept her as a broodmare."

There's a reason an important trotting Stakes race is named after Elegant Image. She won 20 of her 41 starts from 1996-1998. She captured 7 OSS Gold Finals and took down the 1997 Simcoe Stakes at Mohawk.

The other tremendous horse owned in part by Millard is Captaintreacherous.

"I bought into him as a partner and, of course, we've bred many horses to him," says Millard.

It makes consummate sense to send a mare to Captaintreacherous. He won 23 of 33 and in a stunning 4-month stretch in 2013, won the \$1,000,000 North

America Cup at Mohawk, the \$500,000 Hempt Stakes at Pocono, the \$635,750 Meadowlands Pace, the \$360,000 Cane Pace at Tioga Downs, the \$250,000 Tattersalls at Lexington, then the \$500,000 Breeders Crown at Pocono. Tim Tetrick drove in all those conquests.

Captaintreacherous earned \$3,153,541.

Natasha Day told *Down The Stretch* that her partnership with Millard could provide her with better stock and that could lead to more success for her at Mohawk. Millard is certainly pleased with Day's involvement with Taylor's Credit.

"She's doing a good job with that colt," he says. "She gets all the credit. She picked the horse out. Actually, she was driving the horse for the previous owners, and they decided they were going to sell it. So, she came to me and ask me if I'd like to go in and I said, 'Sure, go ahead.' So, we bought the horse and he's been just a pleasure to have around."

Taylor's Credit has won 13 of his 88 races, but since Millard and Day purchased him, he has won 6 of 20.

Millard mentions a 2-year-old filly named Wine Delight. She was in a \$6,000 pace on November 25 at Flamboro, and Day delivered a 3rd place finish. As for the proposal that he will help Day get better faster horses – "I like to think I'm going to get some nice horses," he chuckles. "But you never know. I have bought some very expensive horses over my time and sometimes those expenses don't turn out. I've had some great horses with the Kopas (John and Jack),

John Burns, Sandra Burns, Chantel Mitchell, and Brad Maxwell. Then there's Murray Brethour, John Yake, Roger Mayotte, Dwayne Marfisi and early on, people like Leonard Campbell, Randy and Terry Kerr – they were all very important to me over the years. I've had some great horses with Brad Maxwell – not the class of Captaintreacherous, but I have made good money and sold them for good money."

At one point in the interview, I mention that 67-year-old Doug Brown recently won a race at Woodbine.

"Yeah, well, Dougie Brown back in those days, he was one of our top drivers," says Millard. "He drove and trained horses for me. In fact, he's training one right now – he and Mike Wade up at the Training Center."

Almost 3 years ago, Millard had a terrible fall – he slipped on some ice.

"I broke my neck," he says. "At the time I think I had 140 horses when I got hurt, but now I'm down to about 80. So, I'm cutting back pretty much."

We were pleased to hear that Millard is recovering quite well – well enough to tell *Down The Stretch* the pleasure he gets from this sport.

"First off, you've got to love the horses," he says. "And it's the excitement. I went to Mohawk last night to see two of my horses race and I was pretty sure that there was little chance to win with either one of them, but I just love to go and see them race. That's what keeps me in it. You've got to have something to do, and I certainly can keep myself busy with the horses."

Nat's Neat Night



Natasha Day

On Monday, November 13, harness driver Natasha Day provided herself with a week's worth of thrills. Her evening started with drives in the 1st, 2nd, and 6th at Western Fair Raceway in London. Day finished 7th in the first with a longshot but redeemed herself with a win in the 2nd behind the 3-year-old trotting filly, Lolita Hanover.

In that race, a 34-1 shot, Sko'den and driver J Harris tried to steal things. They went to the lead and going down the backstretch opened up as many as 4 lengths. Day took Lolita Hanover first up on the outside and methodically her filly began to eat into her rival's lead. It took until mid-stretch for Lolita Hanover to finally get the lead, and she would hit the wire 1 ½ lengths the best in 2:03.3. Lolita Hanover is trained by Brittany Kennedy and owned by Dean and Ashley Wilson, and she paid \$7.50 to win. This was Day's 3rd straight win with the filly.

"She likes to get out and just keep on rolling," says Day, explaining her first over tactic." She was having a first start back after a couple of weeks, so she got a little grabby in the hole and we weren't going overly fast so she's better off if she can get out."

Day's 3rd drive at Western Fair that night was a 5th place finish

in the 6th race which went off shortly before 8 pm. Then she jumped in her car for the 80-minute drive to Mohawk Park to be teamed with Taylor's Credit in the 8th.

"I messaged Dave, the paddock judge when I was leaving Western Fair and said, 'I'm leaving now. I'm going to be there by 9:20. The race went off just after 10 p.m.'"

And race 8 at Mohawk on November 13 needs to be seen. Taylor's Credit had post 1, and Day gave the 8-year-old gelding a decent start, getting him into 6th down the backstretch. As the field started to negotiate the far turn, Taylor's Credit seemed hopelessly jammed up with horses in front of him and beside him. Into the stretch, Day was able to extricate herself from the rail, but she still had to deal with NASCAR-esque traffic as drivers and horses spread themselves across the track. In mid-stretch, Taylor's Credit was right behind Kraken Seelster driven by Jonathan Drury. Day had to make a remarkable move to get past that one – she right-lined Taylor's Credit sharply and went zooming past. With clear road ahead, Taylor's Credit roared past rivals and won by a neck in 1:53, using a :26.3 final quarter to record the win. Day trains and shares ownership of this horse, so she knows him pretty well.

"He's a little nut," she laughs. "You can't get him up front anywhere. You have to settle him and hope and pray that a trip works out. He loves to come off the speed. He's got a blistering last quarter."

A lot of Toronto Maple Leafs would be envious of the stick handling Day demonstrated in that race.

"When I first got off the fence, he's one of those horses that once you start him up, you can't really stop him," she says. "So, I started him up and he gained so much momentum and the next minute JD was like right in front of me. I think he heard me coming and he turned around and saw me and I

was just like, 'Yup, sorry, we're coming through,' and we pretty much just stepped right by the side of his wheel and off we went."

As stunning as that win at 25-1 was, Taylor's Credit had a crazy encore for the fans. As Day and the horse were in the winner's circle, an impatient Taylor's Credit flipped over, did a little spin on the ground, and then righted himself.

"That's pretty standard for him," shrugs Day. "That's not the first time he's done that. In the winner's circle, you pretty much have half a minute to stand there and take a photo, but we were there for probably about two minutes. He doesn't appreciate that, so he throws himself and he gets back up and then he's fine and off he walks."

Taylor's Credit is also owned by Doug Millard, and this was his 13th win in his 88th race. He paid \$52 to win.

This was not the first time that Day has won twice at 2 different tracks on the same day.

"I have done it before," she says. "Because I used to do the Hanover Sarnia trip quite a bit and the Hanover Georgian run also. I won't say it's a common occurrence but it's, you know, it's not something that's unusual."

With her upset score at Mohawk, Day was up to 66 harness driving wins in 2023. Last year, her 74 victories were a career best, so she seemed to be on pace for a career year. *Down The Stretch* wondered if she enjoys being called "the best female driver" or if it makes her feel marginalized?

"It's something that I've kind of always wanted to be – the best female driver in North America," she clarifies. "Sometimes, I don't even want to label it as the best *female* driver. I would like to be up there as one of the best drivers. Driving against the guys at Mohawk definitely makes you a better driver, so I'm trying to focus more on getting some more Mohawk horses to be driving down there on a more regular basis."



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ODDITIES & ENTITIES



Driver James MacDonald understands how important it is to attract younger people to the sport

In America, it's unlikely the name submitted for the #1 horse would have been approved. We can only guess it means something different in Japanese. This horse, by the way, finished far back, in a sense, perhaps he soiled the sleeping area...

PP#	HORSE	JOCKEY	MLO
1	Shita Bed	Shohei Takahashi	99
2	J K Uluru	Ryuji Tatsushiro	8
3	Shogun	Tadanari Konno	14
4	Felice Rally	Yoichi Ando	20
5	Esprit Andy	Taniuchi Kanta	50
6	Sophia Cor	Ryo Fujita	6
7	Build Rapport	Fumio Matoba	12
8	Samba De Rumba		7/2



This hypnotizing image by photographer Jessica Hallett is remarkable. On Breeders Crown night at Hoosier Park, she caught the field of 9 going down the backstretch in a moment when all 36 legs were off the ground!



On Sunday, November 26, the principals of **Down The Stretch** enjoyed lunch at Woodbine. From right to left - associate editor Susan Nash, editor Peter Gross, layout artist Gord Steventon, Garnet Brnsdale, man of multiple skills, and Susan's husband and executive assistant John.

How did we do in the betting? The final voucher tells the story.



In the 12th race at the Charlottetown Driving Park on November 12, a seagull clearly beat the pacers to the wire. The unfortunate gamblers who had bet the bird were disappointed when it was ruled the seagull was offstride at the wire and placed 4th.



DOWN THE STRETCH PODCAST

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

November 5, Episode 198:

Santa Anita hosted 14 Breeders' Cup races. This podcast has the stretch call of all of them; not many longshots and very modest returns for Canadian connections. There were 3 Stake races on the weekend at Woodbine – The Grey, the Mazarine and the Autumn and we have multiple harness racing angles: Driver **Tyler Borth** walks us through his 7-win night in London. **James MacDonald** won 6 last Friday at Mohawk. Ed Hensley hit the 6,000 win mark at Flamboro. **Julie Walker** stunned the bettors when she won the all-lady drivers race at Mohawk. A 2-year-old filly in Australia paced a mile in 1:49.1 and our friend from down under, **Ric Chapman**, previews the \$8 Million Melbourne Cup.

November 12, Episode 199:In episode 199, we have Stakes races at Woodbine on Friday and Saturday. **Rafael Hernandez** did not violate his wedding vows but he did score with 4 females on the same day. **Tattoo Artist** lost to **Bythemissal** and that probably affected his Dan Patch status. **Cody Dorman** died on the plane ride home from the Breeders' Cup, but the story of Cody and **Cody's Wish** will resonate forever. Race caller **Frank Mirahmadi** breaks down the races from the Breeders' Cup that he thought were the most exciting. And photo-Journalist **Jessica Hallett** talks about the generosity of the industry after a horrible stable fire at Tioga Downs.

November 19, Episode 200:This week we feature the Kennedy Road Stakes from Woodbine and it was an Australian horse that won. **Rafael Hernandez** is in his 20th year as a jockey and he tells us how he won 4 races on the same card recently. **Sofia Vives** enhanced her apprentice jockey stats with an impressive 3-win Friday at Woodbine. We have a great betting story – trainer-owner-journalist **Santino DiPaola** breaks down the \$48,000 he and his entourage won and **Garnet Barnsdale** explains why betting on a second time out horse in a mandatory payout pool is the best thing to do with your betting dollar. And the pacer, **Sintra** had a retirement party at Mohawk last Saturday. **Jody Jamieson** and **Dave Menary** offer unforgettable memories of a wonderful 48-win warrior.

November 26, Episode 201:

There were 2 important Stakes races from Woodbine on Saturday, but the story was **Kevin, Steve and Sid Attard** taking down 5 of the 10 races, including both features. Jockey agent **Neal Wilson** talks about how **Desean Bynoe** is the 2nd of his 2 jockeys to suffer a year-ending broken leg. **Natasha Day** had a Monday night to remember – a win at Western Fair then a win at Mohawk, then a horse doing gymnastic moves in the winners' circle. Woodbine's **Bill Ford** tells us that re-invigorating the E. P. Taylor Turf course is a little more complicated than mowing your lawn. And 68-year-old Hall of Famer **Doug Brown** won a race at Mohawk for the first time in 15 months; how he did it is amazing.

December 3, Episode 202:

Stakes races for 2-year-olds from Woodbine. Three jockeys – **Emma-Jayne Wilson**, **Desean Bynoe** and **Rachel Slevinsky** talk about their scary race-related accidents – all three injured in November. Owner **Lou Tucci** won the Queen's Plate with **Midnight Aria** 10 year's ago and has a chance to double up with a King's Plate win after his **Babbo** won the Coronation Futurity. We had two longshots in the first 3 races last Thursday night at Mohawk – prices so huge, no one hit the Pick-3. Jockey **Justin Stein** has burst out of his long slump; in fact, recently he's practically torrid. **Nikki Cowper** is the owner, trainer and exercise girl for a horse named **Seattle Signal** and when that filly won at 24-1, it was her first thoroughbred win. And who many people named **Miller** need to win on the same night before you crack open a beer?



ON AIR

DOWN THE STRETCH



A Podcast with Peter Gross