

THE BUCKEYE Harness Horseman

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The Official Publication of the
Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association

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Prince Hal Hanover

Wins \$300,000 Milstein Memorial By Michael Carter



Following a disappointing disqualification in The Meadowlands Pace, the connections of Prince Hal Hanover hoped he would rebound. He did so in a big way.

After winning the Grade 1 \$385,000 Adios Final at The Meadows on July 26, he solidified his place among the top 3-year-olds with a powerhouse victory in the Grade 2 \$300,000 Carl Milstein Memorial on Aug. 9 at MGM Northfield Park.

Swingtown (Ronnie Wrenn Jr.) and Prince Hal Hanover (Todd McCarthy) were both put into play entering the first turn. Smooth Dream (Andrew McCarthy) came away in third and watched the pair duel as the Carl Milstein Memorial field entered the backstretch.

McCarthy allowed Swingtown to clear before a blazing first quarter in :25.4. McCarthy was not content to sit in the pocket as he moved Prince Hal Hanover back to the lead entering the far turn for the first time.

"I didn't want to turn it into a speed duel early," McCarthy said. "I was keen to re-move to the lead; I just hoped it wasn't too much on him. We got a cheap half, and that helped us out."

As the field approached the half (:54.3), Smooth Dream was flushed out by Primo Maschio (Trae Porter). Porter then put Primo Maschio back on the rail, allowing Twisted Destiny (Dexter

Dunn) to move into second over position, and Fast Choice (Scott Zeron) was on his back third over.

Entering the backstretch, Smooth Dream kept on coming, and as they approached the three-quarters in 1:22.4, the stage was set for a duel through the final quarter of a mile.

Around the final turn, Prince Hal Hanover stepped clear of Smooth Dream. Twisted Destiny tipped off cover three-wide, but as they came through the stretch, Prince Hal Hanover's lead was insurmountable, as he drew off to win by one and three-quarters lengths in 1:50.1.

Twisted Destiny paced all out but had to settle for second with Swingtown in third.

"Prince Hal Hanover is getting better as the season goes — he was very aggressive on me tonight," said trainer Dr. Ian Moore. "I wasn't a huge fan of the fractions, and the retake wasn't that easy either. Todd was able to get a little bit of a breather, and I was happy about that."

Owned by Prince Hal Hanover Stable of Ontario, the 3-year-old colt by Captaintreacherous pushed his career earnings to \$868,954 with the victory.

Paris's Dragon Dominates \$100,000 Myron Charna President's Pace

By Michael Carter



Paris's Dragon won the \$100,000 Myron Charna President's Pace at MGM Northfield Park on Aug. 9, marking his third straight victory.

Driver Dan Noble wasted no time getting Paris's Dragon off the wings, leaving alertly and getting control of the pace entering the

first turn. Racing Rampage (Matt Kakaley) took position in the pocket in front of Dunkin' (Tim Tetrick) in third.

Arriving at the first quarter in :26.3, Noble had a two-length lead entering the far turn for the first time.

As the field approached the half in :55.3, Dunkin' began to apply pressure first over, with Racing Rebel (Chris Page) riding cover second over.

After the three-quarters in 1:22.1, Paris's Dragon pushed ahead and was no match for his foes.

Through the stretch, the 4-year-old Fear The Dragon gelding held off a hard-charging Racing Rebel to win by three-quarters of a length in 1:50.2.

Owned by Dennis Owens and Norman Rae Racing of Ohio, the Christi Noble trainee now has career earnings of \$499,747.

Ferretti Wins \$100,000 Tom Aldrich President's Trot

By Michael Carter



Ferretti wasted no time taking the lead in the \$100,000 Tom Aldrich President's Trot at MGM Northfield Park on Aug. 9. He made every pole a winning one in a valiant effort.

Big Box Hanover (Luke Hanners), Longshot (Chris Lems), and Ferretti (Matt Kakaley) fired off the wings, but Big Box Hanover came away with the lead entering the backstretch.

Ferretti was not content to sit and continued to advance on the leaders, parked through a :27:1 first quarter.

Finally clearing rivals, Kakaley got a major second-quarter breather, arriving at the half in :56.2.

Longshot started to apply pressure first over entering the clubhouse turn for the final time.

At three-quarters in 1:24.3, Ferretti clung to a short lead over Longshot, who continued to grind away on the outside.

Turning for home, Ferretti kicked away from his rivals and won by two lengths in 1:54.2.

"I've always liked this horse," Kakaley said. "He was very good. He just waited for everyone to get close, and he raced them."

Owned by David Rovine Stable LLC of Florida and the CTC Stable of New York, the 6-year-old Creatine gelding is trained by Travis Alexander.

It was his seventeenth career victory, pushing his career earnings to \$339,840.

Reaching a Milestone By Wes Mayberry

Ronnie Gillespie couldn't have picked a better horse than Big Ranger to take to the winner's circle for his 1,000th career driving victory.

"That was the goal — I wanted to win my 1,000th with Big Ranger," Gillespie says. "I didn't know if that was going to happen, though, because I had quite a few drives at the fair (in Wapakoneta) the night before, and I thought I was going to do it there. But, fortunately, it worked out perfectly."



Gillespie trains Big Ranger and describes him as the hottest horse in his stable. The In Range colt delivered Gillespie's milestone win at Eldorado Scioto Downs on July 31 in the Ohio State Fair Stakes that serves as the first leg of the Ohio Triple Crown. The victory came in 1:56 in the second division of freshman colt trotters as Big Ranger finished one-and-a-half lengths ahead of second-place Ur Ride Is Here. Add that to victories in the Next Generation and the first leg of the Ohio Sires Stakes, and Big Ranger has had an impressive 3-for-3 start to his career with \$128,000 in earnings.

"He's won some big races this year, and getting my 1,000th win with him — people will remember that," Gillespie says. "If you reach a milestone at a fair, no one would've remembered that. But when you win major races like that, people are always going to remember it."

Big Ranger entered that race as the heavy favorite, but Gillespie harbored concerns stemming from some soreness the colt was experiencing in one of his feet. From the sulky, he could tell Big Ranger wasn't 100% going into the final turn. But even at something less

than his best, Big Ranger completed the gate-to-wire victory while also finishing on a flat tire.

"Good horses find a way to overcome, and he did just that," Gillespie says.

A Mississippi native, the 53-year-old Gillespie got his first driving win in 1997 at the Neshoba County Fair in his home state. He started driving regularly in Ohio in 2020 and is nearing \$5 million in driver earnings. Now with 1,000 wins under his belt, he's come a long way from his humble beginnings.



"I wasn't born into the business. Coming from a small town in Mississippi and starting out pretty much on my own, it was just a fun thing," he says. "For me to get my 1,000th win out of my own stable means a lot."

Looking ahead, Gillespie envisions a bright future for Big Ranger. The colt has a lifetime best of 1:54, but his trainer believes he has the potential to trot 1:52 under the right conditions.

As for his potential as an Ohio Triple Crown winner?

"If he gets a good draw, I feel really good about him," Gillespie says. "That's what I'm shooting for is the Triple Crown."

“He’s won some big races this year, and getting my 1,000th win with him — people will remember that.”
— Ronnie Gillespie

In other Ohio State Fair Stakes action...

Freshman Colt Trotters

Uncle Danny and Tom Largo joined Big Ranger as freshman colt Freshman Colt Trotters

Uncle Danny and Tom Largo joined Big Ranger as freshman colt trot winners.

In the first division, Uncle Danny (Anthony MacDonald) scored an upset victory as a 53-1 longshot for trainer Jason McGinnis. The Uncle Peter gelding won in a lifetime-best 1:56.4 for his second victory in six career starts.

Tom Largo (Dan Noble) won the third division in a lifetime-best 1:57.1. The Long Tom gelding and Scott Cox trainee rallied from fifth place at the three-quarter mark for his second career win in four starts.

Freshman Colt Pacers

Pet Project (Trevor Smith) scored his first career win, taking the first division in 1:52.2. The Pet Rock gelding is trained by Kimberly Dailey.

Lindy Dragonwater (Chris Page) won the second division, also in 1:52.2, marking a lifetime best. Trained by Ron Burke, the Downbytheseaside gelding has two wins in three career starts.

Crocodile Station (Ronnie Wrenn Jr.) won the third division in 1:52.3, marking his first career victory. The Downbytheseaside gelding is trained by Michael Hitchcock.

Freshman Filly Trotters

Speedbewithyou (Austin Hanners) won the first division in 1:57. Trained by Todd Luther, the Mission Accepted filly has hit the board in all four seasonal starts.

Demonic Niko (Noble) won the second division in 1:57.1. The Erv Miller trainee has hit the board in all five starts in 2025 with four victories. The In Range filly increased her career earnings to \$135,250.

Godusa (Noble) won the third division in 1:56. A Nancy Takter trainee, the Ready For Moni filly has two wins in three starts.

Freshman Filly Pacers

Trained by Burke, Shacarri (Page) won the first division, crossing the line in 1:54. The Summa Cum Laude filly, who equaled the Scioto Downs track record for 2-year-old filly pacers in winning her first career start in 1:51.1, has two victories in four career starts.

Jim Arledge Jr. trainee Madetorockette (Brett Miller) rallied from eighth place at the three-quarter mark to take the victory in a lifetime-best 1:54.3 as a 32-1 longshot in the second division. The Pet Rock filly has two wins in four seasonal starts.

Sophomore Colt Trotters

Trainer Sandy Beatty drove Long Highway to victory by a nose in 1:54.3 as the top six finishers were within one-fifth of a second of

each other. The Long Tom colt has four wins in 11 career starts.

Vekna won the second division in 1:54.2 with trainer Kayne Kauffman in the sulky. The Enterprise gelding has hit the board in 13 of 14 career starts with nine wins and \$152,896 in earnings.

Sophomore Colt Pacers

Swingtown (Wrenn Jr.) won the lone division of colt pacers, edging Burke stablemate Rick Wink by a nose in 1:49.2. The Downbytheseaside colt has 10 wins in 19 career starts with \$715,984 in earnings.

Sophomore Filly Trotters

Eric Nesselroad trainee Jailhouse Pearl (Hanners) scored the victory in the first division in a lifetime-best 1:54.2. The Long Tom filly has hit the board in 23 of 24 career starts with 13 wins and \$168,777 in earnings.

At 18-1, Mocha Hill (Wrenn Jr.) won the second division in an upset, rallying from fifth place at the three-quarter pole to win by a neck in a lifetime-best 1:54.3. Trained by Burke, the What The Hill filly has seven wins and earnings of \$307,892 in 16 career starts.

Sophomore Filly Pacers

Noble drove Virgil Morgan Jr. trainees Odds On Hialeah and Odds On Chesapeake to victory in gate-to-wire fashion in the two divisions of filly pacers.

Odds On Hialeah won the first division, tripping the wire in 1:51. The Lather Up filly has hit the board in all 12 lifetime starts with 10 wins to go with \$441,500 in earnings.

Odds On Chesapeake took the second division, winning in 1:51. The Downbytheseaside filly has 10 wins and \$317,700 in earnings in 17 career starts.

The first leg of the Ohio Triple Crown is in the books. The final two legs — the Ohio Breeders Championship at the Delaware County Fair and the Ohio Sires Stakes Scarlet Championships at Dayton Raceway — will be contested in September.



Ohio Sires Stakes Action

Odds On Hialeah and Odds On Chesapeake are locked in a competitive battle in this year's Ohio Sires Stakes.

Tied atop the sophomore filly pace standings with 179 points each, the Virgil Morgan Jr. stablemates have three victories each through four legs of the OSS. After winning a division in the first two legs, they remained top contenders in legs three and four.

In the third leg at Eldorado Scioto Downs on July 5, Odds On Chesapeake won the first of two divisions in 1:50.4. The Down-bytheseaside filly led wire to wire, winning by more than two lengths. Odds On Hialeah, meanwhile, was the runner-up in the second division to Rose Run Aimee, who crossed the line in a lifetime-best 1:49.4.

Odds On Chesapeake and Odds On Hialeah were set for a showdown in the fourth leg at MGM Northfield Park on Aug. 10, as

there was just one \$100,000 division. Odds On Hialeah rebounded in a big way, as the Lather Up filly won by almost three lengths over second-place Odds On Chesapeake in 1:52.1.

Overall, Odds On Hialeah has four wins and one second in five seasonal starts and has hit the board in all 13 career starts with 11 victories, two seconds, and earnings of \$491,500. She is owned by Let It Ride Stables, Odds On Racing, and Operation Horsepower.

Odds On Chesapeake has been nearly as impressive, hitting the board in seven of eight seasonal starts with six wins and one second. She has 10 wins and three runner-up finishes in 18 career starts with earnings of \$342,700. She is owned by Odds On Racing and Operation Horsepower.



Odds On Hialeah



Odds On Chesapeake

Heating Up

Sophomore Filly Trotters

Three horses — Dream Something, Aunt Laura, and In The End — have two wins each through four legs.

Uncle Peter fillies Dream Something and Aunt Laura are the top two in the standings with 141 and 129 points, respectively.

Trained by Miles Wollam, Dream Something won a division of the fourth leg at Northfield Park on Aug. 9 in 1:56.2 to add to her opening-leg win in a lifetime-best 1:53.3. She has \$257,523 in lifetime earnings and is owned by Julie Ann Sweet and Wollam.

Morgan Jr. trainee Aunt Laura recorded a runner-up finish in leg four to add to her victories in the first two legs. The 2024 champion as a 2-year-old, she has career earnings of \$350,165.

Sophomore Colt Pacers

Rick Wink is the only sophomore colt pacer with a perfect 3-for-3 mark in the OSS. After taking a division in each of the first two legs, the Ron Burke trainee added a victory in the third leg at Scioto on July 5 in 1:49.2. Owned by Burke Racing Stable, RAS Racing, Knox Services, and J&T Silva-Purnel & Libby, the Bit Of A Legend N colt has hit the board in 15 of 17 career starts with 12 wins and \$444,750 in earnings.

Another Burke trainee, Fear The Hate, is second in the standings with 115 points. The Fear The Dragon colt recorded a win in each of the first two legs and placed third in the third leg.

Sophomore Colt Trotters

Lt Loverboy sits atop the standings with 166 points. After a third-place finish in the opening leg, the Long Tom gelding has posted a victory in each of the past three legs. The Daren Harvey trainee took the first division in the third leg at Scioto on July 5 in a lifetime-best 1:52.1 and was a winner in the fourth leg at Northfield Park on Aug. 9 in 1:54.2. Owned by Wayne Mast Jr. and Callam Racing, he has hit the board in 17 of 18 lifetime starts with 10 wins and \$458,660 in earnings.

Marseille gelding Battle Hill is second in the standings with 117 points. After posting a win in each of the first two legs, the Matthew Burkholder trainee failed to hit the board in legs three and four.

Freshman Filly Pacers

She'safirewoman is the top 2-year-old filly pacer thus far, going 3-for-3 and amassing 153 points. The Catch The Fire filly posted a lifetime-best 1:51.4 in the second leg, and her other two wins came in 1:54.3 and 1:54.2. Trained by Mark Winters, She'safirewoman has hit the board in all six seasonal starts with five wins and earnings of \$111,689. She is owned by Harry Horowitz.

Seaside Shuffle, a winner in each of the first two legs, was not entered in the third leg. Trained by Burke, the Downbytheseaside filly is second in the standings with 102 points.

Freshman Filly Trotters

Demonic Niko leads the freshman filly trotters with a 3-for-3 showing and 153 points. The In Range filly posted a lifetime-best 1:55.4 in the first leg and won a division in the next two legs in 1:57.1 and 1:56.2, respectively. Overall, she has hit the board in all six seasonal starts with five wins and one second.

She is trained by Erv Miller for owners Ervin Miller Stable, Anthony Lombardi, and Douglas Overhiser.

Fellow In Range filly and Miller trainee Lucky Lady Volo is second in the standings with 128 points. A winner in each of the first two legs, she placed second in the third leg.

Freshman Colt Pacers

Seven divisions through two legs of the OSS have produced seven different colt pace winners. Pet Project, Swelce, and When Is Parade are tied atop the standings with 64 points each. Other winners thus far include Crocodile Station, Gentleman's Club, I'llbetyourboots, and Lindy Dragonwater.

Freshman Colt Trotters

Ready Russell is 3-for-3 in the OSS thus far and leads the standings with 153 points over fellow Ready For Moni gelding Special Moni in second with 103 points.

After winning a division in the opening leg in a lifetime-best 1:55, Ready Russell posted victories in the next two legs in 1:56.4 and 1:56.2, respectively. Trained by Deborah Swartz for owners Jeff Fought Racing, Brian Carsey, and David Fought, Ready Russell has four wins in five seasonal starts.

Chris Beaver trainee Special Moni recorded a win in the second and third legs, the latter of which came in a lifetime-best 1:56.4.

Bubbles Out, Joyofmylife

Sophomore filly pacer Bubbles Out and freshman filly trotter Joyofmylife As have established themselves as



Bubbles Out

After three legs, Bubbles Out held a commanding lead in the 3-year-old filly pace standings as the only horse with multiple BSS wins this year. Trained by Trish Foulk for Foulk Stables, the Downbytheseaside filly had 153 points and was well clear of a second-place tie between Judge Me Again and Maddie's Delite with 78 points each. Judge Me Again was a winner in the second leg and a runner-up in the third leg. Maddie's Delite posted a victory in the first leg and a runner-up finish in the second leg.



Joyofmylife As

Joyofmylife As, the top freshman filly trotter in the BSS this season, is 3-for-3 with 153 points. Her victory in the third leg came in a lifetime-best 1:55.1 after posting wins in the first two legs in 1:56.4 and 2:00.1, respectively. The Guardian Angel As filly is trained by Anette Lorentzon for owners ACL Stuteri AB and Kjell Johansson.

Lorentzon-trained horses won four of the five divisions in the third leg at Eldorado Scioto Downs on Aug. 12, as Mockingbird As, Wild As Her As, and Chasingstardust As also scored victories. Dan Noble was the winning driver in all four races. Chasingstardust As joined Hangtighthoney L and Judy's Moni as two-time winners in the BSS this year. They are tied for second in the standings with 128 points each.

Eyes Up has separated herself among freshman filly pacers as the only horse to post multiple victories through three legs. The Lather Up filly won a division in the opening leg in 1:56.4 and posted a lifetime-best 1:54.4 in her second-leg victory. She was a runner-up in the third leg and has 128 points. Eyes Up is trained by Deborah Swartz for owners Harry and Darlene Alltop. Standerosa is second in the standings with 90 points. The daughter of The Panderosa is trained by Tye Loy. She has hit the board in all three legs of the BSS with a win in the third leg after finishing third and second in the first two legs, respectively.

Sweet Rose' is the top sophomore filly trotter through four legs of the BSS this year. Trained by Burkholder, the Marseille filly posted victories in the first leg in 1:59.1 and fourth leg in 1:56.3. She was a runner-up in the second leg and placed third in the third leg and has 141 points. She is owned by Lori Blodgett and lessee Courtney Burkholder.

The standings are tightly packed below Sweet Rose' with Up in second with 104 points followed by Travel Nurse with 103 points and In The End and Pelican Hanover with 102 points each. In The End and Pelican Hanover are both two-time BSS winners this season.

The freshman colt pacer division has proven highly competitive this year, as five horses — Heerz Corinthian, Hunka Hunka, Odds On Rpj, Stoke The Fire, and Wagon Day — have posted two victories each through three legs. Odds On Rpj holds a slight edge in the standings with 115 points to 108 points for second-place Stoke The Fire. Odds On Rpj posted a lifetime-best 1:55.3 in his first-leg win and added a third-leg victory in 1:57.1 after finishing third in the second leg. The Downbytheseaside gelding is trained by Virgil Morgan Jr. for owner Odds On Racing. Stoke The Fire is a Catch The Fire gelding trained by Scott Cox. He posted a victory in the second and third legs in 1:53.1 and 1:56, respectively.

As Headline BSS Action

top contenders in the Buckeye Stallion Series this season, as both horses were perfect through three legs.

Action in the BSS for freshman colt trotters was highlighted by a dead heat between Come N Get Me and Okay One More in the second division of the third leg at MGM Northfield Park on Aug. 13. Both horses crossed the line in 2:01. It marked the second BSS win of the season for Okay One More. Ready Made also became a two-time winner with a victory in the third leg. Eckert Hill Brady leads the divisional standings through three legs with 77 points thanks to a win in the opening leg and a runner-up finish in the second leg. The In Range gelding is trained by Rosy Weaver, who co-owns the horse with Roger Huston and Kabby D LLC. Ready Made is tied with Rudedude L, a winner in the third leg, for second in the standings with 64 points.

Derby Up, Fly High Cruiser, Johnny Up, and Twin B High Tide have two wins apiece through three legs of the BSS for sophomore colt pacers. All four horses posted back-to-back victories in the second and third legs. Johnny Up is atop the standings with 115 points with Fly High Cruiser not far behind in second with 111 points.

Lather Up gelding Johnny Up is trained by Edward Miller for owner Allen Miller. He followed his second-leg win with a third-leg victory in a lifetime-best 1:52.1. Lorentzon trainee Fly High Cruiser, a Yankee Cruiser gelding, posted a lifetime-best 1:52.3 in the third leg after winning his second-leg race in 1:54.

The sophomore colt trot division is headlined by a trio of two-time winners in Rose Run Ari, Letsgotoparis, and I Stand Alone As. Through three legs, Triumphant Caviar gelding Rose Run Ari leads the standings with 115 points followed by Mister Anson gelding Letsgotoparis in second with 111 points. Trained by Todd Luther, Rose Run Ari posted a lifetime-best 1:55.1 in the opening leg and added a victory in the third leg in 1:56.1 after placing third in the second leg. He is owned by Greg Luther Racing. Letsgotoparis scored a third-leg victory in a lifetime-best 1:56 and won a division of the second leg in 1:56.3. He is trained by Edward Miller, who co-owns the horse with Ashley Dunn.

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Track Records Continue to Fall

Aug. 8 was a big night at Eldorado Scioto Downs as Oh Look Magic equaled the North American track record for aged (5+) trotting geldings, winning the Open II in 1:50.2. That matched the North American five-eighths mile track records set by Hillexotic at Harrah's Philadelphia in 2023 and Prince Of Honor at Scioto earlier this year on June 13. Sam Widger drove for trainer Ron Burke. The 5-year-old son of Looklikeachpndale bested his previous lifetime mark of 1:52.2. He is owned by Burke Racing and Weaver Brussemi.



Oh Look Magic

One race earlier, Shadows Dancers broke her own track record for aged mare pacers as Dan Noble took her across the finish line in a lifetime-best 1:48 to win the Fillies and Mares Open Handicap. Her previous track record was 1:48.2, set on July 11 with Tyler Smith. She is trained by Christi Noble for owners Howard Taylor and Chris McGuire.

The next night at Scioto, Women Layer broke the pacing track record for 4-year-old geldings, winning the Open Pace in a lifetime-best 1:47.3. Widger drove the son of Sweet Lou for trainer Virgil Morgan Jr. The previous record of 1:48.1 was set earlier this year by Rose Run Zane with Austin Hanners. Women Layer is owned by Let It Ride Stables, Douglas Overhiser, Jeff Fought Racing, and Larry Wills.

The pari-mutuel tracks weren't alone in seeing record-breaking performances.

On the first day of the Pike County Fair meet in Piketon on July 25, Uncle Joe broke the trotting track record in winning the Carl Harness Jack MacDonald Memorial Free For All trot in 1:58.3 with trainer Shelby Cheadle in the sulky. The previous record of 1:59.4 was set by Insomniac in 2019.

One race later, Fearless Delight won the second division of 3-year-old colt pacers in 1:55.2, getting his first career victory and breaking the old pacing track record of 1:55.3 set by Petacular Rock in 2021. Dylan Fagan drove the Fear The Dragon gelding for trainer Bret Schwartz.

On July 28, on the first day of the Columbiana County Fair meet in Lisbon, Promise At Dawn broke the trotting track record, winning the first division of 3-year-old filly trotters in 2:04. Jason Thompson drove for trainer Kerry Merriman. Tiny Tom matched that time the next day, winning the second division of 3-year-old colt trotters with Thompson in the sulky for Eli Miller. The previous trotting track record was 2:04.2 set by Kandy Sweet in 2024.



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First Wins for Steck, Angus Highlight Milestone Moments

By Wes Mayberry

Teens Ranger Steck and Madison Angus scored their first career driving wins to highlight some recent notable achievements in Ohio harness racing.

Making his fifth career start, Steck drove 8-year-old Big Bad Whamo to victory in the Terry Holton Youth Driving Series pace in 2:00.2 on the second day of the Fayette County Fair meet in Washington Court House on July 19 for owner-trainer Robert Brooks.

“Once I finally got that first win, I knew that I was starting to put things together. It was a great feeling to know that all the work I put in over the winter paid off,” Steck said. “Big Bad Whamo is an old horse, so he knows what to do. I got out in the two hole and followed all the way, but he was wanting the front the whole time.”

As fate would have it, the 19-year-old Steck learned after the race that Washington Court House was where his father, Ron, scored his first driving win in 1984 with Widow Mite.

“My dad made his name as a driver, and to know that’s where he got his start back in the day is really encouraging to me because he had a great career,” he said. “It shows me I’m working in his direction.”

Ron Steck has amassed 1,559 wins and over \$5.1 million in earnings in his 42-year driving career, and Ranger has tried to emulate his father in everything he does.

“If you look up Ron Steck on YouTube, there are a thousand videos that come up of



Ranger Steck with Big Bad Whamo

him winning. As a kid, I’d sit there on my iPad and watch him race, and I just knew he was awesome,” the younger Steck said. “Him being in the horse business has completely shaped the way I am. Everything he does, I try to do exactly the same way.”

His dad’s success may be a lofty benchmark, but Steck didn’t take long to add a second win to his ledger. The Marengo resident guided Big Bad Whamo to a wire-to-wire victory on Aug. 8 at The Hartford Fair in Croton, winning the Holton by almost nine lengths in 1:58.2.

Steck made five starts in the two-day Croton meet, increasing his seasonal total to nine in what he hopes is the beginning of a long career.

“I’d really like to pick up more drives next year and hopefully drive my dad’s horses around the fairs and see where it goes from there, and then maybe get to Scioto and get to race with the big dogs someday,” he said.

“Once I finally got that first win, I knew I was starting to put things together. It was a great feeling to know that all the work I put in over the winter paid off.”

— Ranger Steck



Madison Angus with Stateside Deuce Gb

Angus, also 19, scored her first win in her driving debut on July 26, guiding Stateside Deuce Gb to victory in 1:55.1 in the Holton during the Summit County Fair meet at MGM Northfield Park.

“That win meant so much to me,” Angus said. “I can’t thank everyone enough who gave me a chance throughout the whole

process, and I can’t thank my dad enough — he’s been my biggest supporter. My best friend, Emma Hershberger, and older brother, Tyler, have also been big supporters.”

The 19-year-old resident of Sagamore Hills entered the race thinking she had no shot at a victory. But she ended up winning by almost four lengths for trainer Keith Kash Jr.

“Nobody really left hard, and I was able to get out there and get in a hole,” she said of the race. “I knew the horse in front of me wasn’t really the best, so I could get out and get moving.”

Earlier, on July 2 at Northfield Park, Angus scored her first career training win with a horse she claimed in May — 12-year-old gelding Wagon Master. Her brother, Tyler, was in the sulky.

“That one meant a lot to me. I start at 5 a.m. and am up all night either paddocking or racing my own,” she said. “Wagon Master is a special horse. I knew he was going to be special when I claimed him.”

Looking ahead, Angus would like to buy a trotter at the Buckeye Classic Yearling Sale in the fall as she pursues her dream of owning a small stable. She is currently attending Kent State University and is scheduled to graduate with a degree in exercise science in two years.

“That win meant so much to me. I can’t thank everyone enough who gave me a chance throughout the whole process.”
— Madison Angus

In other notable news...

Ohio-sired Bythemissal surpassed \$2.5 million in career earnings on Aug. 8. His second-place finish in the Grade 2 \$300,000 Dan Patch Stakes at Harrah’s Hoosier Park put his career earnings at \$2,514,544. The 6-year-old Downbytheseaside gelding continues to close in on It’s Academic, who is the all-time leader in career earnings among Ohio-sired horses with \$2,762,283 in his career from 2019-2024.

Driver Chris Page surpassed \$80 million in career earnings on July 21, winning the \$25,500 Great Lake Stakes for 2-year-old colt trotters with Be Relentless in 2:07.4 at Fowlerville in Michigan. The Delaware, Ohio, native began driving in 2000 and had amassed 7,434 wins and \$80,839,723 in earnings in 43,737 starts as of Aug. 14.

Chris Lems exceeded \$30 million in driver earnings on Aug. 11, guiding Up to a second-place finish in the fourth leg of the Buckeye Stallion Series for sophomore filly trotters at MGM Northfield Park. A resident of Streetsboro, Ohio, Lems began his driving career in 2003 and had totaled 3,468 wins and \$30,035,747 in earnings as of Aug. 14.

Patrick Melloy Jr. hit the 1,000-win plateau as a trainer on July 25, driving 5-year-old Sportswriter gelding Johnny Freight, a 55-1 longshot, to victory in 1:50.1 at Harrah’s Hoosier Park. A resident of Eaton, Ohio, Melloy Jr. began training in 1998, and he had \$5,474,688 in lifetime trainer earnings as of Aug. 14.

Daleville, Indiana, native Susan Miller recorded her first career driving win on July

30. In her second career start, the 27-year-old drove Country Girl Charm to victory by over five lengths in 2:01.2 in the second division of the Ray Henley Memorial Signature Series Trot during the Greene County Fair meet in Xenia.

On July 27, Jeff Nisonger dominated the 17-race Preble County Fair meet in Eaton with eight driving wins. Six of those winners were from his stable. The fastest of those driving victories came with Spinal Cracker, winning the second division of 3-year-old filly pacers in 1:59. Also from his stable, he drove Mickey’s Moni, Cruisino-verfire, Ourcoltofmancolor, Delta Lady, and Zumma World to victory. His other driving wins came with the Pamela Young-trained Whispering Breeze and the Randy Smith-trained Big Booty Rudy.

My Week at the Clyde Hirt Journalism Workshop

Editor's Note: Konner Hines, a rising junior at Baldwin Wallace University majoring in marketing and international business, and Emily Cain, a rising junior at Ohio University majoring in journalism, strategic communications, and sport management, were two of four students selected to participate in the 2025 United States Harness Writers Association's Clyde Hirt Journalism Workshop. The workshop is sponsored by the Hambletonian Society and culminated with the 100th Hambletonian on Aug. 2. These are the first-person accounts of their experiences.



Konner Hines

Never in my life did I imagine writing a story about horse racing, a sport I thought only existed in old movies or as a backdrop in novels. But one unexpected week at the Clyde Hirt Journalism Workshop completely shifted my perspective, not just on the sport, but on storytelling itself.

The week kicked off at the Harness Racing Hall of Fame, where I got a deep dive into the sport's rich and fascinating history. It was more than just facts and names; it was passion, legacy, and tradition.

I even got to drive a racehorse myself, checking something off my bucket list I didn't even know was on it. Later that day, I wrote my

first-ever advance, which focused on driver Dexter Dunn, for the Asbury Park Press. I had just three hours to get it done.

As the days flew by, our schedule was packed: meeting top editors at the New York Post, interviewing professional athletes and coaches at the Giants' training camp, and diving deep into the intricate world of harness racing.

We learned how to read score sheets, understand the nuances of drivers and trainers, and absorb the language and rhythm of the sport, all in less than a week.

Then came the main event: the 100th Hambletonian. We had under two hours to write a full race recap. With adrenaline pumping, I documented how Nordic Catcher S, who I personally saw as a longshot, emerged as the champion. The room went silent as we hit "submit," mentors reviewing our work, interns quietly reflecting. It was a moment when everything clicked.

This experience didn't just teach me how to cover a race; it taught me what it means to be a journalist. To inform, to preserve, and to spotlight stories the world may have overlooked. In a time when journalism faces decline, storytelling like this feels more urgent than ever.

I walked away with \$36 from a \$2 bet on Mr Penner, but far more valuable was leaving as a more confident, curious, and committed journalist.



Emily Cain

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to attend the Clyde Hirt Journalism Workshop and cover the 100th edition of the Hambletonian at The Meadowlands in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

I heard about this workshop through Tom Wright, the president of the Little Brown Jug Society, where I have also been interning this summer. I was joined by three other college students, and we all had the chance to gain tons of experience in a few short days.

I was able to visit Goshen Historic Track and the Harness Racing Museum & Hall of Fame in Goshen, New York. At the track, I was able to sit behind a trottingbred horse and take a lap with a driver. We also took a guided tour of the museum, where we learned more about the history of the sport and notable individuals who have been recognized for their work and involvement in harness racing.

As part of covering the event, I was assigned a feature to be published ahead of the Hambletonian for The Boston Globe about Scott Zeron, the three-time Hambletonian winner and 2023 Dan Patch Award Driver of the Year. I also went to the New York Post in Manhattan to have my story edited by some of their staff and sit in on an editors' meeting.

One of the highlights was attending the New York Giants' training camp, where I got to take photos during practice, interview players, and even meet head coach Brian Daboll. Later, at The Meadowlands, I was able to ride in the starting car for one of the races as well as appear on The Meadowlands Racing & Entertainment broadcast with Dave Little.

Throughout the week, I also learned how to watch, describe, and recap a race. On Hambletonian Day, I wrote a race recap that was published in The Boston Globe. Over the course of five days, I had

the chance to meet many professionals in the field of journalism/media and learn so much from doing hands-on work.

I want to thank Debbie and Dave Little, Garnet and Nick Barnsdale, Jeff Porchak, and Adam Berkowitz for guiding me through this experience and teaching me so much about the world of harness racing. This workshop provided me with so many opportunities I will cherish and skills that I will carry with me throughout my future!



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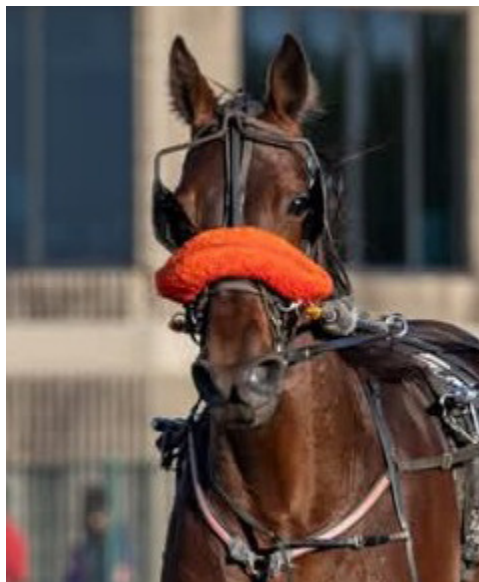
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Pictured above 2024 Little Brown Jug winner Captain Albano (Conrad Photo)

The Turnaround of Rose Run Aimee

By Bob Roberts

Walt Disney couldn't write this script on his best day.



There are horse tales and there are horse tales. And then there's what's going on in the northwest corner of Ohio. The unfolding story of Rose Run Aimee, a pacing tomboy turned fairytale filly, is one that sells tickets and popcorn at a theater near you.

Dr. Jill Dentel, 35, the majority owner of the 3-year-old pacing filly, spends most of her waking hours working as a licensed veterinarian. James Ehram, who trains the daughter of Breeders' Crown champion Racing Hill out of the Western Terror mare, Private Performanc, is also a great juggler of the clock on the wall. While Dentel is wrapped up in vaccines and surgeries of small animals at her Countryside Animal Clinic in Wauseon, Ehram heads a road crew in nearby Swan Creek Township.

And Rose Run Aimee? She has given up running through fences and kicking the walls of her stall to pace a hole in the wind. In fact, she's not only won seven of 16 lifetime starts, a leg of the Ohio Sires Stakes, and \$115,711, but has, not once but twice, equaled the Scioto Downs track record for sophomore pacing fillies with matching miles in 1:49.4.

Rose Run Aimee was originally purchased at the Buckeye Classic Yearling Sale for \$11,000 by a partnership of four gentlemen — William Rufenacht and Gene Roth of Archbold, Ohio, and Jeffrey Bankey of Fremont, Indiana, owned half of her, and trainer Russ Sutherland, stabled at the Fulton County Fairgrounds, owned the other half.

"Her early training didn't go so well," said Dentel. "She was just, and I hate to say a nightmare, but she was a nightmare. She did everything wrong. She tried to run Russ in the infield, and into fences. She would kick the walls of her stall all day and try to run over anyone who came near her."

Rose Run Aimee wouldn't relent. Just before she turned 2, Sutherland banished her to a nearby farm.

"And the people there didn't particularly love her either because she kept running through their fences," said Dentel. "I don't know how she didn't hurt herself, but thankfully, she did not. I know this because I was the vet at the farm."

Come February of last year, after she had exhausted just about everyone who tried to jog her, Sutherland offered to sell Rose Run Aimee to Dentel.

"I really didn't want to buy her," she said. "But after he asked me three times, I talked to Ehram. He said he'd sat behind her and she had talent. I finally said yes. I always wanted a horse that I could go to the fairs and have fun with, so I bought half of her for \$5,000, and the other three gentlemen kept their half."

Rose Run Aimee would become the first horse that Dentel would get to the races. Are you listening, Walt Disney Studios?

Returned to the Fulton County Fairgrounds, and now in the care of Ehram, Rose Run Aimee finally began settling down.

"He turned her into a civilized citizen," said Dentel. "He put a lot of miles on her. James trains her, and we take turns jogging her. She listens so well. She's now the perfect gal."

Rose Run Aimee's racing career began with a qualifier at Delaware on June 25 of last year. She finished last of six but qualified in 2:01.1. It was then off to the county fair circuit where she would make nine starts over three months with very good results.

Following second-place finishes at Oak Harbor and Bowling Green, Rose Run Aimee broke her maiden, hitting the winner's circle on Aug. 7 at Attica. Timed in 2:03.4, her margin of victory was a length.

"It's the only race I missed," said Dentel. "I was in between farm calls. I watched the race on my phone, and it kept rebooting. About the time she hit the three-quarter pole on my phone, my friends were texting me congratulations. I knew she won before I saw that she won."

A second score came on familiar turf when Rose Run Aimee won at Wauseon's Fulton County Fairgrounds, breaking the two-minute barrier with a 1:59.1 clocking. Fittingly, Ehram was in the sulky that day.

"She was starting to get it," he said. "The ability was always there."

"But she was still immature," said Dentel. "In the turns, she would throw steps in, constantly a half a step away from running. I went over her, other vets went over her, and I was told just give her time. Let her grow up. That was the primary reason she stayed at the fairs last year."

Yet for the year, Rose Run Aimee raced 10 times, with three wins, three seconds and a third for earnings of \$22,711.

While the filly got the better part of the winter off, the daily routine of Dentel



and Ehram continued as a marathon in stamina.

"My alarm goes off at 4:15 every morning," said Dentel. "It gives me time to get ready for work, let my dogs out, and give them breakfast. Then, I'm at the barn no later than 5:30. James is already there feeding the horses we care for. I jog Shorty (her nickname for Rose Run Aimee) and he takes out to the track a gelding that we've got. We come back in, bathe the horses, and put coolers on them. By 7 a.m., it's time for both of us to go to work."

"Guys on my road crew know where I'm coming from," said Ehram. "I'm already dirty from the track. Yeah, I'm sure there's a little manure on my work boots. But it's all worth it. Who would believe we have a Sires Stakes winner and a track record-holder."

Rose Run Aimee began her 2025 campaign with a May 1 qualifier at Northfield Park. She finished second and was clocked in 1:57.3. It was followed by her first pari-mutuel start of the season in the first leg of the Steve McCoy Series at Scioto Downs on May 9.

It was not only Dentel's first-ever visit to the Columbus track, it was her first trip to a pari-mutuel track of any sort. It would be a memorable one. Rose Run Aimee was on her toes, not only winning off by five lengths, but posting a 1:51.3.

"I'm watching, nervous as hell, from the paddock, and all I could see were horses flying by," said Dentel. "I didn't realize we had won. Somebody said, 'Hey, get in the golf cart and get over to the winner's circle.' I couldn't believe she won, and I couldn't believe she went in 51 and 3."

Although stunned by the rapid victory, Dentel, while unhooking Rose Run Aimee, asked Dan Noble, who drove her, if he was available to drive her in the Buckeye Stallion Series nine days later at Northfield.

"He looked at me kind of funny and said, 'Jill, no. You're going to the Sires Stakes.'"

About the date with the Sires series. Listen as Dentel comes clean about the nominating payment.

"My partner Bill Rufenacht is budget friendly, or, as he likes to say, he's frugal. He doesn't like to waste money, so when it came to staking time, I won't lie. I didn't tell Bill I staked her to the Sires because I knew Bill wouldn't like it."

Paid in full and a week later, they were back at Scioto racing for a purse of \$65,000 in the first of five Ohio Sires Stakes legs instead of racing for \$20,000 in the Buckeye Stallion Series. Rose Run Aimee paced a big mile, chasing home the 3-5 favorite Odds On Hialeah and finishing second, beaten by just one and a quarter lengths. The race was timed in 1:50.3.

Two weeks later, on May 30, in the second leg of the McCoy, she dominated, winning by two and a quarter lengths in 1:50.2. The effort set her up for another showdown with Odds On Hialeah. Again, she finished second. Revenge would come a month later, but first was the \$30,000 McCoy Final on June 13.

It would be a memorable evening. Rose Run Aimee powered to a wire-to-wire four-and-a-quarter length victory in a track record-equaling 1:49.4 mile for 3-year-old fillies.

"In the winner's circle, Dan told me, 'You know, I've sat behind a lot of good horses, but this is a great horse. She's special,'" Dentel recalls.

Dentel and Ehram are unconventional in their approach to preparing for big races. They put multiple weeks between starts for Rose Run Aimee. There was a three-week



gap between the McCoy final and the July 5 leg of the Ohio Sires Stakes back at Scioto Downs, a much anticipated final showdown with Odds On Hialeah.

"Before the race, Noble said to me, 'You haven't raced her for three weeks,'" said Ehram. "I told him, 'Just go to the front, you'll be alright.' After the race, he told me he was amazed."

That's because Rose Run Aimee not only beat Odds On Hialeah by a length, she once again equaled the Scioto Downs track record of 1:49.4.

"Did we celebrate?" said Dentel. "It was the 14th race, and by the time we got done at the state barn, it was 12:45 in the morning. We drove home, fed the horses breakfast, and went to bed."

Since the big score, Dentel's phone continues to ring with offers to buy Rose Run Aimee.

"I'm not selling," she said. "I'm single. I own a vet clinic and a farm, and I'm not interested in any kind of offer. Few things in life make me as happy as this filly. It's more than the money she's earned; it's how much fun I'm having with her."

Dentel and Ehram are doing things their way — setting records and cashing big purse checks with a mare who's learned her manners.

EDITOR'S NOTE: After 26 days without a start, Rose Run Aimee raced at Scioto Downs on Aug. 1. Against a field of eight older fillies and mares, she finished third, beaten a length in 1:50.2. She proceeded to finish fourth in the lone division of sophomore filly pacers in the fourth leg of the Ohio Sires Stakes on Aug. 10 at MGM Northfield Park.

‘Something Special’

By Wes Mayberry

To hear Neil MacInnis tell it, the story of Rhodena Blue’s first career win is one of incredible circumstances.

“Bred by accident, foaled by someone who had never foaled a horse before, groomed and co-owned by a 9-year-old who bosses me, and travels to races with a Shetland pony,” MacInnis posted to his Facebook page after Rhodena Blue’s first career win on July 23 at MGM Northfield Park.





It wasn't just any win. Making just her second career start in a purse race, and first ever on a half-mile track, Rhodena Blue tripped the wire in 1:57 to win a division in the second leg of the Buckeye Stallion Series for 2-year-old filly pacers. In what driver Aaron Merriman described as a "wild ride," the Lather Up filly left from the rail and was third at the halfway mark. She pulled wide on the ensuing turn but quickly regained momentum to lead the field past the three-quarter pole and into the final stretch en route to the almost two-length victory.

"Going to the half, she felt eager — like she wanted to go — but she got very steppey, and when I went to help her, she pulled up to about five or six wide," Merriman says. "Then it was like she knew she made a mistake and was like, 'I want to go,' so I just let her pace. I just kind of walked her through the last turn, and she just went."

MacInnis, a Canadian horseman who trains Rhodena Blue and co-owns her with 9-year-old daughter Rory, was ecstatic.

"It shows that if you persevere and work hard, good things will happen," he says.

Neither Rory nor Rhodena Blue's Shetland pony companion, Queenie, was able to join MacInnis and his victorious filly in the winner's circle that night in northeast Ohio. But there was still plenty of reason to celebrate, especially in light of what the family endured five years ago.

Healing Through Harness Racing

In the face of unimaginable tragedy and heartache, MacInnis has found solace in harness racing.

"In retrospect, I don't know what would have happened if we didn't have the horses

to focus on," MacInnis says, reflecting on the life-altering events of 2020.

That was when MacInnis' wife, Sarah, passed away. She was diagnosed with cancer in late 2019 and passed away just six weeks later, leaving a gaping hole in the lives of Neil and Rory.

"Our lives were torn down and destroyed," MacInnis says. "We were very much alone and isolated."

Due to COVID-related restrictions, MacInnis and his daughter were forced to grieve alone. He admits to entering a very dark place mentally. So dark, in fact, that he didn't want to live anymore. The anxiety, depression, and panic attacks became almost too much to bear.

To try to cope with his grief, MacInnis had decided to leave the equine industry. But divine intervention had other plans. When he was packing his supplies in the barn, he found a note his wife had written encouraging him to continue his passion for horses. He opted to heed that advice, and he's glad he did.

"Our dedication to the farm, our horses, and racing increased not as a result of my wife's passing but because of it — there is a difference. In crisis and tragedy, you must keep moving and use anguish as a motivator," he says. "The barn and our horses became the outlet where Rory and I found solace and healing, and it really developed our relationship because it was something we did together."

It's easy to see why time spent with the horses had such a powerful healing effect. Sarah, an avid equestrian, had Rory in the barn with her from the moment she was born, strengthening the bond between mother and daughter and the love each of



Rhodena Blue in the winner's circle at MGM Northfield Park **Photo:** Diane Wise Photo



Aaron Merriman drives Rhodena Blue to victory in the second leg of the Buckeye Stallion Series at MGM Northfield Park.

them had for horses. That provided fond memories for Neil to focus on.

“I can still see them to this day — Rory in the saddle and her mom gently pulling the reins of the horses as they floated around the paddock,” he says. “I’m incredibly fortunate to have had the time that I did with Sarah and the daughter she gave me and the life that we have.”

Now Neil shares his own special bond with Rory thanks in part to Rhodena Blue and Queenie.

Rhodena Blue

There was just something about Rhodena Blue that stood out to MacInnis from the moment she was born.

“There has always been something special about her,” MacInnis says.

The filly is the result of both loss and happenstance. When MacInnis’ mare, McTaylor, was in foal to Bulldog Hanover, he discovered she was pregnant with twins. An attempt to save at least one of the twins was unsuccessful, leaving McTaylor barren

as Bulldog Hanover was on his way to The Meadowlands toward the end of breeding season.

“I was down about it all,” MacInnis says.

Unbeknownst to him, there was still hope in the form of a phone call from a number he didn’t recognize. Rather than let it go to voicemail like he almost always does with unknown numbers, he answered. On the other end was a lady from Sugar Valley Farm asking if he intended to breed his mare to Lather Up. Having had no intentions to breed to an Ohio stud, MacInnis was confused. But considering Lather Up’s history — 23 wins and over \$1.7 million in earnings in 37 starts from 2017 to 2019 — he was quick to respond in the affirmative.

“Lather Up was a stalwart as a racehorse, and that option was intriguing to me,” MacInnis says. “I later realized that my brother did the booking as a backup.”

Fast forward to June 6, 2023. McTaylor gave birth to a foal — Rhodena Blue. MacInnis named her after a Cape Breton community that no longer exists and the blue spruce mountain that anchors behind it. While he admits that his training methods with her were a bit unconventional, MacInnis saw plenty of potential for her in racing.

“I started jogging her in the back fields and roads near my farm. The trail takes us through valleys and small rivers and just about everything you can go through in rural areas. The distance is about eight miles, but she thrived on it,” he says. “When I finally brought her to the track, she was plenty fit to go tough miles. She has a willing attitude and slick gait. I started her cautiously by design knowing full well the miles she will need to go this summer.”

MacInnis drove Rhodena Blue to a second-place finish in a qualifier at Grand River Raceway on July 2 with a time of 2:00.3. He returned to the sulky on July 10 for her first purse start, placing fourth in 1:56.4 in a race at Woodbine Mohawk Park. Two weeks later, Rhodena Blue, along with pal Queenie, made the trip across the border that ended with the BSS victory.

Queenie

As a Shetland pony, Queenie was an unconventional addition to MacInnis’ stable. But her presence has been invaluable in more ways than one.



Rory was introduced to Queenie through her coach, April LeBlanc, who owned the pony at the time. She started riding Queenie when she was 5 and suggested to her dad that he bring the pony to school to interact with the students.

“So we started bringing her in, and the students loved the experience,” MacInnis says. “I really wasn’t supposed to, but we did it anyway. For many, it was the closest they would ever get to a horse.”

The bond between Rory and Queenie only grew from there. Rory has been competing with her and has even been known to sneak her into the house, especially around Christmastime.

“Queenie never left and has been here ever since,” MacInnis says. “I guess she is staying for good now.”

Probably so, as Rory isn’t the only member of the MacInnis household Queenie has bonded with. Rhodena Blue has also found the Shetland pony to be a comforting presence, especially during transits.

“One day I shipped Rhodena, and the whole ride up she was not happy. So we ended up taking Queenie with us, and Rhodena stayed relaxed,” MacInnis says. “Now they always come as a pair.”

At home, Rhodena Blue and Queenie are inseparable in the field. The Standardbred steps up to protect her smaller companion when necessary.

“Whenever the other horses try to bully Queenie, Rhodena will stand in front of her,” he says. “They balance each other out somehow.”

Their bond is also a strong reminder of just how much horses have meant throughout many generations of the MacInnis family.

A Generational Passion

Though he now lives near Toronto, MacInnis grew up in Cape Breton Island at the eastern end of Nova Scotia. His parents weren’t involved full-time in equine affairs — his father was a school principal while his mother was a nurse. His dad was an exceptional athlete in baseball and track and field, though, and his love of horse racing grew from his love of competition.

“When he was old enough, he would drive some of the older gentlemen to the races at

the track, and from there, he had a few of his own horses,” MacInnis says of his father.

He passed that love of horses on to his children.

“We always had a few horses racing at the fairs, especially in the summer months. It was a real thrill,” MacInnis says. “Eventually, I got my driver and trainer license and started racing and owning my own horses. My brother, Ross, trains and drives, and another brother, Allan, is keen on the breeding side. We talk often, and 99% of it is harness racing.”

While working full time as a high school English teacher and raising Rory, MacInnis still finds time to care for the horses he owns on his small farm in Primrose, Ontario. He breeds, trains, drives, and mostly shoes his own horses.

“Anyone that comes from a rural upbringing knows that your days are 5 to 9 and not 9 to 5,” MacInnis says. “The days are all-encompassing, and it leaves little time for anything else. But it is all we know, and I don’t think we would have it any other way.”

His recent trip to Ohio only further reinforced harness racing as his labor of love.

“One of the things I realized when I went down to Ohio is that the roots of racing are still there. I met some amazing people, and I really enjoyed the experience,” he says. “Being on the Northfield backstretch, it took me back in time to see the track kitchen and men walking around with programs in their back pockets. I was on cloud nine because it reminded me of what I grew up with, and to cap it off with a win — it doesn’t get better than that.”

MacInnis’ family connection to horses is special, and he’s hoping it continues well into the future.

“I noticed in my historical family photos there were always horses in the background,” he says. “I want Rory to have the same experiences I had so that years later our future descendants will notice those familiar beings in the background — horses.”

Healing

There’s no way to ever fully heal from the sudden, unexpected loss of a loved one. But Neil and Rory have found some solace in their horses. They also credit the support from friends such as Roger Mayotte and renowned veterinary surgeon Dr. Huw

Lewelyn and more recent Ohio-based acquaintances including Chris and Tessa Lems and Sam and Jodi Schillaci. Neil is also thankful for a newfound companion who has helped him and his daughter find comfort amidst grief.

“I have met someone else, Jacalyn, and she and her daughter, Phoebe, have been an incredible complement to my life, giving daily stability and support,” he says.

It hasn’t all been smooth sailing, though. In preparation for Rhodena Blue making her U.S. debut in the BSS, MacInnis was transporting her and Queenie to Georgian Downs and was involved in a collision when another motorist ran a red light.

“Queenie was flipped upside down, and Blue had a few scrapes, but they seemed to be OK,” he said at the time. “So we were ready to take on some tough competition in Ohio.”

Against that tough competition, Rhodena Blue came out on top.

“Our gorgeous little hell-raiser survived a head-on collision five days before and then a hustle down to Ohio with her sidekick to win her first race,” MacInnis posted on Facebook.

The victory truly was the culmination of incredible circumstances.

“When I think about the odds of any of this happening, all those watershed moments, the happenstance, the art and promise that happens in everyday life if you stop long enough to consider it — What could be better?” MacInnis says.



Catching up with Walt Callam and Wayne Mast

What are your first memories of horses as a youth?

Mast: We always had horses growing up, but I never got involved with that end of it until I started going to the races with my cousins — that's where I got hooked.

Callam: It was with my grandfather. He would pick up my brother Chuck and me and tell my grandmother he was taking us to the zoo. For a couple of years, we wondered why there were only horses at the zoo.

Growing up, what did you want to do with your life?

Callam: I planned to be an accountant. I graduated from Ohio State with an accounting degree. Six months later, my brother called about opening a restaurant, and I've been involved with restaurants ever since. I have a restaurant called Trader Jack's Riverside Grill on the Chagrin River. Before that, I was involved with my brothers and the Winking Lizard Tavern.

Mast: My dad had a farm equipment business, and it was my goal to be in that business. We sell tractors and things. I want to give a shout-out to all the horsemen who have bought from us. I want to thank them for coming to see us.

What was the first horse you owned?

Mast: The first horse I ever bought, we had a win with him, and it wasn't anything very special. The second horse I bought was very special to me. He was a project when I bought him. I worked with him for quite some time. I got a connection with him, and he is still my favorite horse to this day. I still miss him every day. He taught me so much about how to take care of a horse, the racing end of it. It was a great memory.

Callam: It was Armbro Fanfare. Larry Ferrari called us up, and my brother and I decided to go into partnership. He wasn't much of a horse, but we had a lot of fun.

How did the partnership between the two of you begin?

Callam: Wayne and I both owned horses with Wes Hersherberger many years ago. We would see each other racing at the fairs and one day decided to hook up.

Mast: It has developed into a terrific friendship. We bought some yearlings together, and it has been great.

Do you have a preference between pacers and trotters?

Mast: My heart is always with trotters. It is tough wherever you go, but if you can get a trotter headed in the right direction, there are opportunities. I do love pacers also, but it's tough in the pacing game.

Callam: Strictly trotters. I just think there is a little more horsemanship that goes into trotters, and that's what the trainers I was with had.

Who is responsible for the purchase of Lt Loverboy?

Callam: That would definitely be Wayne and Wes. Wayne has a great eye for yearlings.

Mast: We both looked at the colt at the sale, and we both really liked him. Daren and Scott Cox, who trains for me, also looked at him, and we all agreed he was a nice-looking colt.

When did you realize you had a real good trotter in Lt Loverboy?

Callam: The horse trained down well, but we weren't sure what we had after the first baby race. But every race, he has put it together.



Mast: I really didn't see it coming until his first race. He finished second. A horse does it once, that's great, but can he follow up and improve? He stepped up and won the second race handily. I called Walt and said, "I think we have a racehorse here."

What has been the biggest thrill with Lt Loverboy?

Callam: Every time he races, it is a thrill. I plan my week around it. My family is involved watching and going to the races. Those are great memories we have built over the last couple of summers.

Mast: I'm not sure. He keeps surprising us. I don't know how to explain it. He is an amazing animal. He wants to win. He is very versatile, and it has been a wonderful ride. Going into last year, I never had a 2-year-old that won a Sires Stakes, so that first race he won was very special to us.

After this 3-year-old season, what is the plan?

Mast: We haven't discussed that. I would imagine we would hang on to him, but we haven't talked about it. I always like to keep horses that have potential to keep racing them.

Callam: We take it week by week and hope he stays healthy. We would love to race him as a 4-year-old. If we sell him, we would just use the money to buy something else.

What is your favorite sport to watch or attend?

Mast: The NBA. I'm a Cavaliers fan. I like to go to the games, but it is second to harness racing, of course.

Callam: On TV, it is football. I'm a Browns fan, but it has been rough. If I were going to watch, I would relax at a baseball game.

What do you do in your free time?

Mast: I like to go on vacation with the family. My mom is getting a little older, so any time we get to spend with her is good. My family owns some properties in Sarasota.

Callam: I'm an avid golfer. Once a week, I get together with two of my brothers and my nephews. We are very competitive. I'm an 80s golfer. I should be better for as much as I play.

What is on your bucket list?

Mast: Right now, the top priority on my bucket list is to win a Grand Circuit race. I had the Sires Stakes win on the bucket list. We got that accomplished, so hopefully we get the Grand Circuit accomplished at some point.

Callam: I think what was on my bucket list was to win the Scarlet Championship. We were fortunate to do it three years ago with Longshot and last year with Lt Loverboy. That's still at the top of the list to do it again.

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Willie Winit Welcomes Kids to **BACKSTRETCH BUDDIES CLUB**

The Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association recently introduced a fun, new kids program — the Backstretch Buddies Club!



Led by OHHA mascot Willie Winit, the Backstretch Buddies Club is a free program for kids ages 12 and under who love horses and want to be a part of the exciting world of harness racing in Ohio. Whether it's cheering at the finish line, meeting racehorses, or learning what it takes to be part of the team, there's something awesome around every turn.

As a member of the coolest crew on the

track, members will receive mail from Willie Winit in addition to a club backpack, membership card, trading cards, and invitations to fun event opportunities.

To sign up to become a member, scan the QR code in the Backstretch Buddies ad and fill out the short form. Questions about the club can be sent to info@ohha.com.

Willie Winit is thrilled to welcome the next generation of fans to the races and is eager to make some new friends. He knows kids will surely love being a member of the Backstretch Buddies Club and took time out of his busy schedule to answer a few questions about it.

Q: What do you love most about harness racing in Ohio?

A: The energy! It's so much fun cheering for the horses with your friends and family!

Q: What led you to create the Backstretch Buddies Club?

A: I wanted to show kids how fun harness racing is! There is so much going on at the track, and this club opens the barn doors so every member can explore it all!

Q: Tell kids why they should become a member of the Backstretch Buddies Club.

A: Kids should join the Backstretch Buddies Club because it's super fun! Not only do you get to learn about harness racing, but you get to experience new adventures and even receive cool mail and surprises!

Q: Do you have to know anything about horses or harness racing to be a member?

A: Absolutely not! This club is for everyone, whether you've been around horses your whole life or you're brand new to the industry. Backstretch Buddies is the perfect place to learn and have fun!

Q: Lastly, give us some recommendations for where Backstretch Buddies members should go to watch harness racing in Ohio.

A: Awesome places to watch races are Scioto Downs, Northfield Park, Dayton Raceway, Miami Valley, and at your local county fairs! You can also watch live fair races from the comfort of your home thanks to the live streams on the OHHA YouTube page!

Backstretch Buddies Club



We invite you to join the
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- Morgan County (9/5 - 9/6)
- Wayne County (9/9 - 9/10)
- Wyandot County (9/9 - 9/10)
- Guernsey County (9/10)
- Williams County (9/10)
- Delaware County (9/14 - 9/18)
- Ashland County (9/15)
- Tuscarawas County (9/19 - 9/20)
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- Montgomery County (10/5)
- Fairfield County (10/8 - 10/9)

**Scan the code
and join today!**



Equine Health Spotlight:

Joint Injuries

By Wes Mayberry

Joint injuries are common in racehorses, even for those — such as Gold Digger King — who are otherwise quite healthy.



Gold Digger King

“Gold Digger King has been a pretty nice racehorse for me, and he’s been a fairly sound horse. But he’s always had an issue with his joints and his hocks,” says trainer Scott Mogan.

Despite those issues, Gold Digger King has put together a successful career. He has hit the board 81 times in 128 career starts with 37 wins and over \$785,000 in earnings. His best year was as a 5-year-old in 2021, when he won 11 races, all of which were Opens, and earned \$217,165. Now in his eighth season of competition, the Pet Rock gelding has won twice in seven starts in a reduced schedule as Mogan manages his workload.

“He’s 9 years old, so I don’t race him all year round. But he’s an athlete and loves to race,” Mogan says. “He’s low maintenance because he hasn’t had many injuries. He’s still pacing where he always could — 1:49 to 1:50 — but unfortunately his competition is younger and faster. So he doesn’t do as well as he used to, but he still gives it his all.”

Gold Digger King’s joint issues are more of a soreness than an injury, Mogan says, but they still require ongoing care.

“He has dry joints, and we inject him periodically — one, two, or three times a year depending on how many starts he has — to put fluid back in them,” he says. “That’s been his only issue throughout his career, so we pretty much know what to look for, and we inject his joints and give him a week off to give it time to take effect.”

That’s one of many viable treatment options for joint problems, according to Dr. Maureen Kelleher, Trueman Chair in Equine Clinical Medicine and Surgery at The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine. She says minor joint issues such as those experienced by Gold Digger King are fairly common in racehorses because of the sheer number of joints that can be impacted.

“Horses have hundreds of joints in their body, and they can have joint disease in any of them and multiple at the same time,” she says. “There are many joints in each of the four limbs, but there are also hundreds of joints from head to tail throughout the spine, including the ribs.”

Kelleher explains that the most common cause of joint injury is repetitive impact to the joints, which is inevitable in a racehorse due to its training regimen and competition schedule.

“The joint reacts to the forces placed on it by the horse’s body meeting the ground,” she says. “All tissues adapt to meet the stressors placed upon them. The issues arise when the body’s healing processes are not as fast as the forces stressing the tissues.”

In racehorses, most joint injuries impact the fetlocks, hock, knees, stifles, and coffin, Kelleher says. Over time, training and racing causes the joint tissues to break down faster than the body’s repair mechanisms can accommodate, so the joint accumulates waste and inflammatory debris. This leads to mild, then moderate, and even severe joint disease, if left untreated. Mild injuries include a strain of the joint capsule or stress in the lining of the joint, while moderate conditions are those such as cartilage wear/loss and microfractures. Severe cases include a rupture of the joint capsule, cartilage collapse, and bone fractures.

The OSU Veterinary Medical Center suggests a number of treatments for racehorse joint injuries. It starts with a measure of prevention in finding the balance point where the horse can be competitive in races while not pushing its internal reparative processes beyond their limits.

“Most harness racehorses will experience some joint disease in their career and will quickly and easily return to racing.”

— Dr. Maureen Kelleher

“Finding the balance point in training to strengthen bones, joints, tendons, and ligaments for competition that is equal to the rate the horse’s body can keep up with the reparative process will make for a racehorse with a long career,” Kelleher says. “Sometimes you can go beyond that balance point as long as you compensate with adequate recovery time.”

Other treatment options include non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications and injections, including polyacrylamide hydrogel products, that are administered directly into the joint.

In some instances, surgical intervention may be necessary. While this often entails the loss of training time, it can lead to a quicker recovery than rest alone.

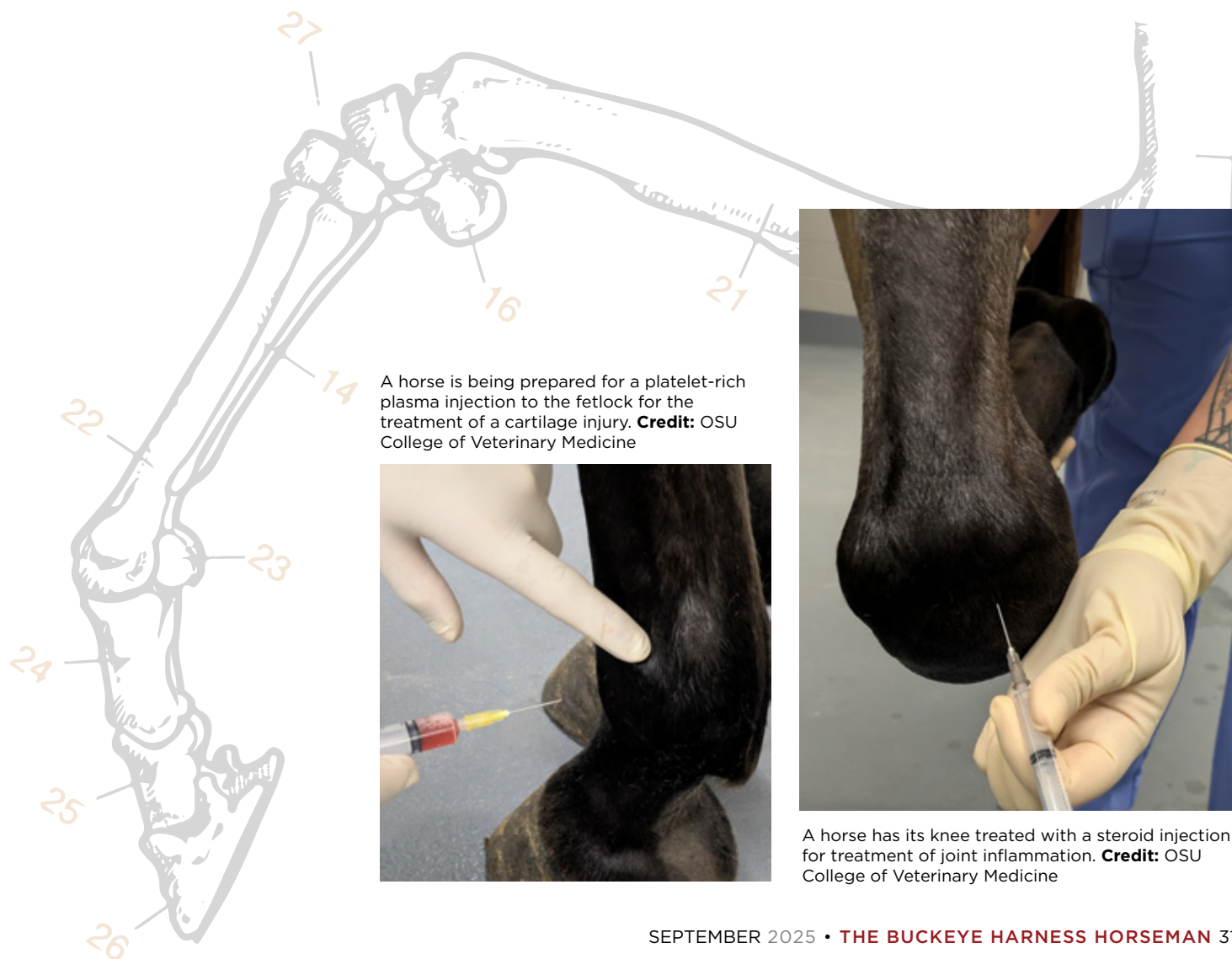
“In some horses with joint disease, surgical flushing of the joint, removal of any debris, and smoothing of any cartilage or bone defects may be indicated to improve the health of the joint and the long-term prognosis for the horse’s return to racing,” Kelleher says. “The horse is likely to be back to work sooner with the surgical intervention than with rest alone due to the removal of the waste from the

joint and returning it back to a place where it can heal much more quickly.”

The recovery process for joint injuries depends on their severity. According to Kelleher, mild injuries require a few days of decreased exercise and some anti-inflammatories in the form of ice, medication, and a compression wrap. Moderate injuries, meanwhile, require those therapies plus a few more days or even weeks of rest and perhaps a visit from a veterinarian to administer one of several joint injection options. Severe injuries may need all of the above in addition to surgical intervention and weeks to months of rest.

Kelleher stresses that joint issues are common in racehorses and are the result of cumulative wear and tear. While the severity of such injuries can progress to the point of being career-ending, proper ongoing care can ensure that they are simply a bump in the road in an otherwise long, successful racing career.

“Most harness racehorses will experience some joint disease in their career and will quickly and easily return to racing,” Kelleher says.



David McDuffee Inducted to LBJ Wall of Fame By Jay Wolf



David McDuffee, a prominent figure in harness racing and a two-time Little Brown Jug-winning owner, has been selected as the 40th inductee into the prestigious Little Brown Jug Wall of Fame by the Delaware County Fair.

McDuffee's lifelong passion for harness racing began in his youth, inspired by his father's standardbreds and a backyard half-mile track at their family home in Pepperell, Massachusetts. He entered horse ownership in the 1980s alongside his longtime partner, Tom Walsh, and has since built an extraordinary career in the sport.

His ownership résumé is distinguished by an impressive list of accomplishments, including winners of 11 Breeders Crown titles, two Hambletonian Oaks, three Kentucky Filly Futurities, and two Little Brown Jug vic-

tories. McDuffee captured the Jug in 1994 with Magical Mike and again in 1996 with Ambro Operative.

In 2024, McDuffee reached the pinnacle of harness racing recognition with his induction into the Harness Racing Hall of Fame in Goshen, New York. He was previously honored as the United States Harness Writers Association's "Owner of the Year" in 2021 and has served as a trustee of the Harness Racing Museum & Hall of Fame since 2014.

McDuffee will be formally honored during a special ceremony on Tuesday, Sept. 16, prior to the 80th edition of the Little Brown Jug (Grade 1). He will also be recognized in the winner's circle on Jug Day, Thursday, Sept. 18.

Robert McIntosh Earns 2025 Neville Award By Jay Wolf



Robert "Bob" McIntosh, the Hall of Fame trainer and three-time winner of the Jugette, will be honored as the 2025 Joseph Neville Memorial Award recipient by the Little Brown Jug and the Delaware County Fair.

McIntosh, who was born in Leamington, Ontario, Canada, first began in the sport of harness racing by helping his father, Jack, run the family stable. He later worked for his older brother, Doug, before establishing his own stable.

His stable has won more than 4,600 races and earned more than \$92 million in purses – the leading money-winner among Canadian trainers and currently fourth all-time in North America.

He was named the O'Brien Award winner as Canada's Trainer of the Year seven times, the U.S. Trainer of the Year twice, and campaigned three horses that were voted Horse of the Year.

At Delaware, McIntosh is credited with 20 training wins from 1992 through 2023. He won three Jugette titles (So Fresh, 1992; Electric Slide, 1994; L A Delight, 2016), three straight Senior Jug crowns (Artsplace, 1992; Ruff Hewn, 1993 and 1994), two Buckette's (Vulcanize, 2007; Windsong Soprano, 2009), two Standardbreds (Princess Callie, 2002; On Golden Ponder, 2013), and a Winbak Pace (Ponder, 2006).

McIntosh was inducted into the U.S. Harness Racing Hall of Fame in Goshen, New York, in 2003 and the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame in 2010.

He passed away on July 28, 2024, at the age of 71.

LBJ Selects Ellen Taylor as the 2025 Lady Pace Honoree

By Jay Wolf



Ellen Taylor, the long-time executive director of the Harness Horse Youth Foundation, will be saluted as the 2025 Lady Pace honoree by the Delaware County Fair.

A native of Hamilton County, Indiana, Taylor was introduced to harness racing at an early age by her parents, Richard and Margot, both of whom are inductees into the Indiana Standardbred Hall of Fame.

She began working with the Harness Horse Youth Foundation (HHYF) as camp coordinator at the age of 16. In 1990, Taylor stepped seamlessly into the role of executive director. Each summer, HHYF travels the Midwest and East Coast introducing and educating thousands of young people to harness racing. As a result, she was the Harness Tracks of America Special Achievement Medal recipient in 2002 and was honored again with the Stan Bergstein Proximity Award in 2009.

Taylor has been cited by numerous organizations for her dedication to the sport, including the United States Trotting Association's President's Award (2015) and the U.S. Harness Writers Association's Alan Prince Member of the Year Award (2015).

She was inducted into the Indiana Horse Racing Hall of Fame in 2024 and the Communicators Hall of Fame in Goshen, New York, this year.

Taylor resides in Anderson, Indiana, with her longtime significant other, Robert "Hollywood" Heyden.

Taylor will be honored after the Ohio Breeders Championship for 3-year-old filly pacers in a winner's circle ceremony on Jug Day (Thursday, Sept. 18).



Don't miss the Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association coverage of
LITTLE BROWN JUG WEEK
5 Days in Delaware Sept. 14 - 18



HarnessRacingOhio.com



Seaside Jet – The Goofy Giant Grows Up

By Dot Morgan

Seaside Jet was something of an enigma on the racetrack. As a massive, gangly 2-year-old, he nevertheless showed promise with a win and \$32,000 in earnings. But after a third-place finish in his sophomore debut, the son of Downbytheseaside failed to hit the board in seven subsequent starts. By fall 2022, trainer Tim Lane made the decision to retire the gelding and send him to New Vocations to begin a new career.



Stacy Briggs with Seaside Jet



Adopter Danielle Meggyesy and Seaside Jet at a foxhunting event in Ohio. Credit: Greg Hutt



Stacy Briggs took on the challenge of giving Seaside Jet additional experience in the hunt field.

At first, Seaside Jet — still green in the manners department — used his size to boss his handlers around. But with a few weeks of groundwork and ample turnout, his "baby brain" began to settle. The big bay started to make real progress in his transition to a pleasure mount.

Meanwhile, Danielle Meggyesy and her husband were looking for a large, young prospect to bring along as a future foxhunter. Longtime volunteers with the local hunt, they were hoping to develop a third horse to have available as needed. Seaside Jet looked like the perfect project.

When Danielle welcomed the lanky 3-year-old — affectionately nicknamed "Roo" — into her life, she expected a challenge. What she didn't anticipate was just how much heart, humor, and headstrong energy would come along with his oversized frame.

Within 15 minutes of their first ride, Danielle had Roo out of the arena and onto a trail, even crossing a creek. Though still figuring out how to manage his long, uncoordinated legs on slippery hills, Roo took to the trails like a tourist on holiday. They kept it slow, focusing on walking, trotting, and hill work to strengthen his tendons and build his body.

"Roo is enormous, goofy, and enthusiastically inquisitive," Danielle recalled with a laugh, "which is the nice way of saying he's a pushy booger who's never met a stranger and wants to be in everyone's pocket."

Although Roo was generally agreeable, he came with what Danielle described as "balk and rear' pre-installed."

"It was clearly rehearsed," she explained. "He'd wait to see if I was scared and going to back down. That's not an evasion that bothers me — I probably had to give him a swat and a growl a handful of times that first year and a half. But he eventually stopped the airs above ground."

That same year, at just 4, Roo got his first taste of foxhunting. Danielle introduced him gradually, first by letting him meet the hounds over the summer followed by a few relaxed, buddy-assisted hunts in the fall. Though he had the occasional baby moment, Roo's curious nature kept him calm and intrigued rather than reactive.

Then came the winter break.

By spring, Roo had transformed into what Danielle lovingly described as a "full-blown teenage rascal."

"Those first few rides back were the worst of our entire partnership," she admitted. "Roo went full-on bratty, know-it-all teenager. We had a few overly exciting rides — tantrums, random leaps, and general young-horse-who's-had-time-off shenanigans. Fortunately, he got the 'Roo-cifier' out of his system after a few outings and returned to being a mostly-good baby horse."

As a 5-year-old, Roo's training picked up. He began to canter under saddle, though with his large frame and expansive stride, he needed room to figure out how to coordi-

nate it all. Over time, as he grew stronger and more confident, the canter transitions became smoother, and his natural trot — a thing of beauty — blossomed. Roo also showed promise over fences, impressing with his natural form and enthusiasm.

While Roo was developing into a competent hunt horse, Danielle knew he wasn't yet ready for the high-pressure role of a whipper-in's mount — a job that demands independence and reliability, especially in emergencies. So she turned to her friend Stacy Briggs to help give Roo more experience.

Stacy started by riding Roo in the slowest field, but the pair advanced quickly. By mid-season, Roo was confidently keeping pace with the first field, and on one occasion, even led the group behind the huntsman.

"Roo has found his happy place!" Stacy shared. "He's enjoying foxhunting, is a natural jumper and a quick study. Roo is not only beautiful, he's also talented, silly, and personable. It's a joy to ride him and see his pride and confidence. We're so lucky to have him in our foxhunting family."

Now 6, Roo continues to mature both physically and mentally. He remains a "snuggly goofball," according to Danielle, but has become more businesslike in the saddle. His newfound focus makes him a true pleasure to ride and a valued member of the barn. What started as a training project became a heartwarming partnership built on patience, growth, and a lot of laughter.

Be There!

BY ROGER E. HUSTON



There are not many people who have experienced what I have in the last 66 years. There have been so many memorable events over the years.

County fairs, Pompano Park, The Red Mile, The Meadows and traveling all over the world to call harness races. Of course, number one has been 58 years at Delaware, Ohio. That number may never be matched by anyone else.

Along the way have been numerous trips to Canada, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Australia, Ireland, Wales, and Great Britain.

From those travels, there have been 12 trips to Ireland to call races at The Vincent Delaney Memorial (VDM) weekend. Those have been some of the greatest in my lifetime.

Traveling with me over the years have been many Buckeyes including Aaron Merriman, Dan Noble, Mike Wilder, Jazmin Arnold, and, this year, Lauren Harmon. All have represented Ohio in grand style as drivers.

It should be noted that horsemen in Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and Great Britain have a much harder road to cover as purses are similar to what we had here in the '60s and '70s. As an example, how about a 10-horse field with only the first three receiving purse money? The richest of some top races is the VDM 2-year-old colt pace with a purse of 28,000 pound sterling.

The horsemen there totally love the sport knowing they can't make much money. The trainers are the only ones making a profit.

The winner of the VDM Pace this year was Ayroplane, who has now won 13 of 14 lifetime with a mark of 1:57. The colt is by Stay Hungry out of Talk Time. By the way, his half-sister, Ayrodrome by Sweet Lou, is undefeated with four straight wins. It is expected that Ayroplane will come to the States after his 3-year-old campaign has concluded.



Lauren Harmon **Photo:** Amanda Stephens

As for Harmon, who competed in the International Ladies Race, the horse she drew had pulled up in her latest race on grass.

Without any knowledge of the horse, she left and settled in third early on. Harmon pulled going first up near the half. It was a stride-for-stride engagement for the rest of the mile only

to put the leader away and then get beat by a horse with a third-over trip to get up by a neck.

"The racing was quite different against an all-woman field from different countries," Harmon said. "Drawing post seven, I may have just ducked and worked out a second- or third-over trip, but I changed and left dropping in third early on. That absolutely changed behind the gate, and I left and fell in third at the start and then came first in. It would have been different racing on a grass surface, but I am glad we were on dirt since I had never raced on grass."

"I want to express my deepest gratitude to my sponsors Dein Spriggs, Anthony MacDonald, and Steve Oldford for making it possible for me to have a lifetime experience," she added.

By the way, she returned home just in time to finish second in a Great Lakes Amateur Driving Association race at Northfield.

Be There! She certainly was!

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Impressive 104 Acre FARM AUCTION

IMPRESSIVE HORSE FACILITY - TRAINING TRACK - PASTURES - BUILDING LOTS
REMODELED HOME - EXTENSIVE OUTBUILDINGS - SELLING IN MULTIPLE PARCELS

SAT, OCTOBER 25 @ 11AM

Live Auction w/ Online Bidding @ RES.bid

Situated at 732 State Route 89 in Polk, OH, this well-rounded and thoughtfully designed property offers an incredible opportunity for horse enthusiasts, breeders, or anyone seeking a beautiful and functional country setting. From the charming homes to the extensive equestrian facilities, every detail has been carefully planned and maintained.

The property features two homes, including a beautifully updated 3-bedroom, 2.5-bath main residence with an attached 1-bedroom, 1-bath apartment—perfect for guests, staff, or extended family. The second home offers 3 bedrooms and 1 full bath and provides additional living space or income potential.

The equestrian amenities are where this property truly shines. With 47 total stalls, the layout includes a 20-stall training and layup barn with a wash bay, a 19-stall broodmare barn, a 4-stall stallion barn with adjoining run-in sheds, and 4 heated foaling and quarantine stalls. You'll also find 9 paddocks, 6 run-in sheds, heated waterers throughout, and an indoor walker to keep your horses in top shape year-round. A scenic 3.5-acre lake sits at the center of a 3/8-mile jogging track, creating a peaceful and functional piece to the farm. The hay barn offers a 200-ton capacity, and the breeding shed is equipped for both natural cover and artificial collection. With over 5 miles of board fence, the layout offers both safety and curb appeal.

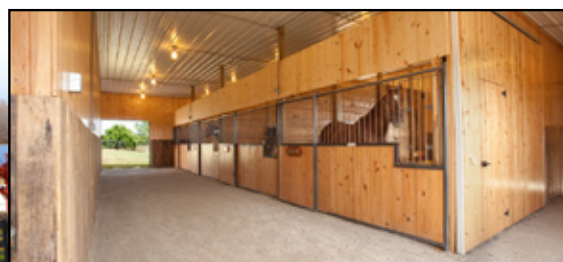
Whether you're expanding your current operation or searching for a one-of-a-kind setting to call home, this property is truly a must-see. Join us for this outstanding auction and see everything this farm has to offer.



OPEN HOUSE

The home and outbuildings will be open for inspection Saturday, October 4th 11AM - 1PM and Thursday, October 9th 5PM - 6:30PM.

Private showings are available through Andy White, 419-651-2152.



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OHIO BREEDERS AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Mares registered in 2019 (Foals of 2020)
mare registration date 11/30/19

Foal Age	Membership Requirement
Foal Born 2020	Membership Required
Yearling 2021	No Membership Required
2 & 3-Year-Old 2022, 2023	No Membership Required

Mares registered in 2020 (Foals of 2021)
mare registration date 11/30/20

Foal Age	Membership Requirement
Foal Born 2021	Membership Required
Yearling 2022	No Membership Required
2 & 3-Year-Old 2023, 2024	No Membership Required

Mares registered in 2021 (Foals of 2022)
mare registration date 11/30/21

Foal Age	Membership Requirement
Foal Born 2022	Membership Required
Yearling 2023	No Membership Required
2 & 3-Year-Old 2024, 2025	No Membership Required

Mares registered in 2022 (Foals of 2023)
mare registration date 11/30/22

Foal Age	Membership Requirement
Foal Born 2023	Membership Required
Yearling 2024	No Membership Required
2 & 3-Year-Old 2025, 2026	No Membership Required

Mares registered in 2023 (Foals of 2024)
mare registration date 11/30/23

Foal Age	Membership Requirement
Foal Born 2024	Membership Required
Yearling 2025	No Membership Required
2 & 3-Year-Old 2026, 2027	No Membership Required

Registration Fee: \$20 per mare. For mares registered in 2019 forward, **in addition to the \$20 registration fee per mare, registrations received from December 1st to December 31st must add a \$100 per-mare late fee. Registration will not be accepted until all fees are paid in full.**

Membership Requirements: All owners of the mare (including those in businesses or stables) are required to join as Active OHHA Members. All business entities or stables listed as owners are also required to join as Associate Members.

Mare Residency: Mare in foal to an Ohio Stallion, must foal in Ohio, and reside in Ohio for 187 consecutive days in the year of foaling.

OHHA SENDS OUR CONDOLENCES TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF

Richard Slaughter • Thomas Minton

2026 FAIR SUPPORT APPLICATIONS

accepted through October 31, 2025

2026 Fair Capital Improvements Application

The purpose of the Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association ("OHHA") Capital Improvements Program is to contribute to construction of and fund expenses for Capital Improvements to Ohio's Standardbred Fairs that hold live racing. The OHHA program is a "100% Matching Funds" grant program; all funds requested and approved must be matched in their entirety.

Starting with the 2020 fair season, OHHA has to date contributed over \$600,000 in capital improvements to live racing programs at fairs across the state.

2026 Fair Feature Race Grant Application

OHHA's Feature Race Grant Program is designed to assist individual county fair race programs to increase the purse for a feature race or races. Existing or new feature races will be considered. A feature race is a mainstay event, a race that would have a higher purse than normal overnight events. This race should have a "story" element to it, such as an honorary or memorial race, and will often promote attendance.

Starting with the 2019 fair season, over \$1.1 million have added feature races to county fair race cards.

To be considered for either our Capital Improvements or Feature Race Program, applications and complete rules can be found on www.ohha.com or by contacting the OHHA office at 614-221-3650 or info@ohha.com.

The OHHA Nominating Committee Announces Candidates for 2026 Board Terms

The Nominating Committee of the Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association (OHHA) has announced its slate of candidates for three-year terms on the OHHA Board of Directors beginning in 2026. These individuals were selected based on their dedication to harness racing in Ohio, their leadership qualities, and their commitment to representing the interests of OHHA members.

The following candidates have been nominated by the committee:

President – Scott Mogan

Owners – Steve Bateson, Keith Gisser, Charlie Myrick

Breeders – Randy Haines, Joe McLead, Ayers Ratliff Sr.

Driver\Trainers – Brian Brown, Jeff Nisonger, Scott Mogan

OHHA members have the opportunity to nominate additional candidates. Members in good standing who reside in Ohio are invited to seek election and play an active role in shaping the future of harness racing in the Buckeye State.

The OHHA encourages all members to participate in the nomination and election process to ensure that the Board of Directors continues to reflect the values and priorities of the harness horsemen and women of Ohio.

For questions or to nominate a candidate, please call the OHHA office at (614) 221-3650. Petitions should be returned to the OHHA office by the close of business on Monday, Oct. 13.



Nomination for the Ohio Outstanding Groom Award

Grooms make up a special group of people who underpin the success of our entire sport, ever present but rarely in the spotlight. The Ohio Outstanding Groom Award highlights an individual who goes above and beyond for his or her horses and the sport of harness racing in Ohio. You can include up to one more sheet of additional information if needed. Please be thorough. The more comprehensive the nomination is, the better chance your nominee has of being chosen. **DEADLINE OCTOBER 1, 2025.**

I. Please provide information about the person being nominated:

Name: _____

Location: _____

II. Explain the role this person has had in the stable.

III. How long has this person been involved in harness racing? How did he or she get started?

IV. In what other activities is the nominee involved?

V. Is there any additional information you would like to share?

Nominated by: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Submit entries by October 1, 2025

to OHHA 2237 Sonora Drive, Grove City, OH 43124 or by email to info@ohha.com



Nomination for the Dick Brandt, Sr. Extra Effort Award

The 24th Annual Dick Brandt, Sr. Extra Effort Award is being offered for the 2025 racing year as part of the OHHA's commitment to county fair racing. Nominations for local Ohio horsemen's associations or individuals that have given time and talent to their county fair

or local community are encouraged. The award is based on involvement with a local fair board, participation in local matinees, community involvement, improvements to track and barn areas, and assistance with the racing programs during fair week. The committee will be able to make the best decision if much detailed information is provided.

Note that if the recipient is an individual, a monetary donation will be made to a harness-racing related organization or charity of that person's choosing.

DEADLINE OCTOBER 1, 2025

1. Please provide information about the association or individual being nominated:

Name: _____

Location: _____

How many years has this person or association been involved in racing? _____

2. Tell us about the association or individual. Include activities that were participated in during 2025. Include any community involvement, harness racing promotional activities, county fair involvement, relationship with the county fair board, track and barn improvements and involvement in the county fair's racing program.

3. Is there any additional information about the horsemen's association or individual you would like to share?

Nominated by: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Submit entries by October 1, 2025

to OHHA 2237 Sonora Drive, Grove City, OH 43124 or by email to info@ohha.com



Nomination for the Terry Holton Youth Award

The 23rd Annual Terry Holton Youth Award is awarded to an individual aged thirteen to nineteen who has actively participated in harness racing during 2025 as a driver, trainer, owner, groom, breeder, official, race office/publicity assistant, track maintenance crew or in any capacity that has provided outstanding service to harness racing. You can include up to one more sheet of additional information if needed. Please be thorough. The more comprehensive the nomination is, the better chance your nominee has of being chosen. **DEADLINE OCTOBER 1, 2025.**

I. Please provide information about the person being nominated:

Name: _____ Birthdate: _____

Location: _____

Age: _____ If in school, grade, and name of school attending: _____

II. Explain the role this person has had in the harness racing industry in 2025.

III. How long has this person been involved in harness racing? How did he or she get started?

IV. In what other activities is the nominee involved?

V. Is there any additional information you would like to share?

Nominated by: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Submit entries by October 1, 2025

to OHHA 2237 Sonora Drive, Grove City, OH 43124 or by email to info@ohha.com



Ohio Breeders' Awards Program

2025 Mare Registration Form

Submit one mare per form; the registration fee is \$20 per mare.
The owner listed first on USTA registration certificate will receive awards.
Mare must foal in Ohio and remain in Ohio for 187 consecutive days during 2026.

Mare's Name _____ USTA Reg Number _____

Ohio Stallion Bred to in 2025 _____

If embryo transfer, name recipient mare _____

Where will mare reside in 2026? _____

Phone and/or email of farm contact person _____

By signing below,

- I state that all information is true and correct.
- I certify that if the mare leaves the state for any reason, I will notify OHHA within 72 hours.
- I understand that any false or fraudulent statements made by me on my behalf may result in automatic removal from the Breeders' Awards Program and may be punishable by law.
- I consent to the OHHA entering the farm or other residence and permit inspection of veterinary, breeding, or billing records, to validate the mare's presence at the location provided.
- I agree to indemnify and hold harmless in law and equity the OHHA for any action that cause any damage to the OHHA, or any agent acting on behalf of the OHHA.
- I agree that the OHHA reserves all rights including the ability to make changes or abolish the program in their complete discretion. All decisions made by the OHHA on all matters concerning the Breeders' Awards Program is final. Any subsequent action or claim arising from the Breeders' Awards Program must first be arbitrated prior to initiating any claim in court or with any administrative agency. The Court of Common Pleas of Franklin County, Ohio has exclusive jurisdiction over any claims arising out of the Breeders' Awards Program.

Signature: _____

Printed name: _____

Registration Fee	\$20
All owners of the mare must be current members of OHHA at \$65 each	
A business (stable, LLC, etc.) that owns the mare must also be a \$25 Associate member	
Total Remitted – Payable to OHHA	

Return all documentation and fees by mail to
OHHA, 2237 Sonora Drive, Grove City, OH 43123
or by email: breedersawards@ohha.com

Registrations must be submitted by November 30, 2025.

(There is a \$100 late fee if received between Nov. 30, 2025 and Dec. 31, 2025. No registration accepted after Dec. 31, 2025.)

Questions can be directed to the OHHA office 614.221.3650
Complete rules can be found at <https://www.ohha.com/info/breeders-awards>

Minutes of the Ohio State Racing Commission Meeting Tuesday, April 15, 2025

Minutes of the Ohio State Racing Commission Meeting held on Tuesday, April 15, 2025

- (1) The Ohio State Racing Commission (OSRC) held its monthly meeting at 10:00 a.m. on April 15, 2025, at the Vern Riffe Center, Room 1948, 19th floor, 77 S High Street, Columbus, OH 43215.
- (2) Call to Order and Roll Call: Chair Beth Hansen called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Commissioners Tom Winters, Greg Simpson, and Dan McCarthy were present.
- (3) Approval of Minutes from the March 18, 2025, Commission Meeting: Commissioner Simpson moved to approve the March 18, 2025, Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Winters seconded the motion. There was discussion concerning whether the missing items from the meet requests from the March meeting had been received. Executive Director Dragone confirmed that they had been with the exception of the exports, which is normal at this time. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.
- (4) Ratification of Executive Director Approvals: Commissioner Simpson moved to ratify the Executive Director's approvals and Commissioner Winters seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote. Executive Director Dragone discussed the importance of cooperation between the tracks due to the flooding that had recently occurred at Belterra Park in Cincinnati and illustrated the spirit of cooperation during last year's Strangles outbreak.
- (5) Approval of Scioto Down Meet Request: Commissioner Winters moved to approve the Scioto Downs meet request, and Commissioner Simpson seconded the motion. Jason Roth of Scioto spoke about the new 16 race paddock, and it will have the Judges office, race office, OSRC offices, test

barn etc. all under one roof. Commissioner Winters amended his approval pending receipt of the fire Marshalls report, and Commissioner Simpson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

- (6) Resolution 2025-04 Casino Tax Revenue Distribution: Commissioner Winters moved to approve the resolution, and Commissioner Simpson seconded the motion. Assistant Executive Director Holly Chandler read the fiscal officers report into the record. The report noted that the Commission has hired an investigator with the extra casino revenue funds. The Commission is having its biannual audit, and the cost of that is approximately \$20,000. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.
- (7) Update on Horse Fatalities: Deputy Director Boulmetis read Dr. James Robertson update on horse racing and training fatalities at the pari-mutuel tracks in Ohio. Through April 12, 2025, there have been four Standardbred fatalities all of which occurred during races. There have been eight total Thoroughbred fatalities: seven racing and one training. The total number of horse fatalities in Ohio to date is twelve. Thoroughbreds have a safety record of 99.78%.
- (8) Monthly Financial Report: Assistant Executive Director Holly Chandler read the fiscal officer, Sherry White's, report into the record and is reflected in item 6.
- (9) Resolution 2025-05 Rule Revision for 3769-3-23 Superfecta wagering: Commissioner Winters moved to approve the resolution, and Commissioner Simpson seconded the motion. Deputy Director Boulmetis commented that the timeline on this rule change was faster than usual, due to the rule change being requested by the permit holders. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

(10) Committee Reports

- A. Medication: There were no comments.
- B. Safety: There were no comments.
- C. Standardbred: Commissioner Winters mentioned that he listened to the HISA town hall on safety and the comparisons they listed between HISA and nonHISA thoroughbred racetracks.

- (11) Commissioners Comments: The state of Belterra Park after the flooding was discussed. HBP A Executive Director Dave Basler commented that there is a lot of work to be done in order to get the track ready, disinfect the barns and race office building. Fortunately, the dorms sit higher than the surrounding area, but still had 5-6 feet of water in the lower dorms. Commissioner Simpson asked how the turf track would do, and Basler said that historically the turf track does very well after a flood, but the main track had all the surface wash away. The stable area is hoping to open on April 25, 2025, with a tentative race date of May 1, 2025, which is the original opening day.
- (12) Public Comments: There were no public comments.
- (13) Executive Session: There was no executive session.
- (14) Adjournment Commissioner Simpson moved to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Winters seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote, and the Commission meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Date, Time, and Place of Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 1948 Riffe Center

Minutes of the Ohio State Racing Commission Meeting Tuesday, May 13, 2025

- (1) The Ohio State Racing Commission (OSRC) held its monthly meeting at 10:00 a.m. on May 13, 2025, at the Vern Riffe Center, Room 1948, 19th floor, 77 S High Street, Columbus, OH 43215.
- (2) Call to Order and Roll Call: Chair Beth Hansen called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. Commissioners Tom Winters, Greg Simpson, and Dan McCarthy were present. Chair Hansen congratulated

Commissioners Winters and Simpson on their reappointments.

- (3) Approval of Minutes from the April 15, 2025, Commission Meeting: Commissioner Simpson moved to approve the April 15, 2025, Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Winters seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

- (4) Ratification of Executive Director Approvals: Commissioner Simpson moved to ratify the Executive Director's approvals and Commissioner Winters seconded the motion. Executive Director Dragone commended Scioto Downs on their new 16-race paddock. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.
- (5) Update on Horse Fatalities: Dr. James Robertson updated the Commission on

horse racing and training fatalities at the pari-mutuel tracks in Ohio. Through May 13, 2025, there have been five Standardbred fatalities all of which occurred during races. There have been nine total Thoroughbred fatalities: seven racing, and two training. The total number of horse fatalities in Ohio to date is 14. The Thoroughbred racing fatality rate is 1.86/1000 starts; Thoroughbreds have a safety record of 99.81 %.

- (6) Monthly Financial Report: Fiscal officer Sherry White stated that our audit should be mostly complete, and our financial status is looking more positive. Tax revenues are down 6%, but that is an improvement from fiscal years 23-24, where they were down 13%. The Commission was able to hire an investigator. Casino revenue distributions were made to all the permit holders to go toward their respective purse pools. Miami Valley and Scioto received

distributions for their commercial operations.

- (7) Adjudication: Zachary Henry. The Commission reviewed the Report and Recommendation of the Hearing Officer. The Commission listened to the comments of Deputy Director Tanya Boulmetis. Henry did not file an objection to the Hearing Officers Report and Recommendation, nor did he make an appearance. The Commission voted unanimously to confirm and approve the Hearing Officer's Report and Recommendation and to uphold the Dayton Raceway 2025-DA Y-59 ruling.
- (8) Commissioners' Comments: Commissioner Winters said he was happy with the Rhoades decision from the Court of Common Pleas clarified the law for some different matters and upheld the Commission's decision. Commissioner Simpson commented on what a phenomenal job

Belterra Park did regarding the flood to have everything back up and running. Commissioner McCarthy, commented on the commission's financial status, and thanked Dave Basler (HBP A) and Frank Fraas (OHHA) for working through some language with the upcoming budget.

- (9) Public Comments: There were no public comments.
- (10) Executive Session: There was no executive session.
- (11) Adjournment: Commissioner Simpson moved to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Winters seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote, and the Commission meeting was adjourned at 10: 15 a.m.

Date, Time, and Place of Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 17, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 1948 Riffe Center

Minutes of the Ohio State Racing Commission Meeting Tuesday, June 17, 2025

- (1) The Ohio State Racing Commission (OSRC) held its monthly meeting at 10:00 a.m. on June 17, 2025, at the Vern Riffe Center, Room 1948, 19th floor, 77 S High Street, Columbus, OH 43215.
- (2) Call to Order and Roll Call: Chair Beth Hansen called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Commissioners Tom Winters, Greg Simpson, and Dan McCarthy were present.
- (3) Approval of Minutes from the May 13, 2025, Commission Meeting: Commissioner Simpson moved to approve the May 13, 2025, Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Winters seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.
- (4) Ratification of Executive Director Approvals: Commissioner Simpson moved to ratify the Executive Director's approvals and Commissioner Winters seconded the motion. Executive Director Dragone made no comments. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.
- (5) Approval for Cost-Of-Living increase: Chair Hansen explained that the Governor allows for parity between non-exempt and exempt employees regarding the collective bargaining cost of living increases. Commissioner Winters moved to approve the approval. Commissioner Simpson seconded the motion. The Chair noted the staff of the racing commission are honest, hardworking, exercise good judgment and strive to be fair and transparent. The

motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

- (6) Update on Horse Fatalities: Dr. James Robertson updated the Commission on horse racing and training fatalities at the pari-mutuel tracks in Ohio. Through June 17, 2025, there have been eight Standardbred fatalities all of which occurred during races. There have been ten total Thoroughbred fatalities: seven racing, and three training. The total number of horse fatalities in Ohio to date is 18. The Thoroughbred racing fatality rate is 1.2/1000 starts; Thoroughbreds have a safety record of 99.89%. Dr. Robertson also discussed the "Stride Safe" technology, which is a wearable sensor that analyses the gait of horses during racing, to identify any changes. Dave Basler of the HBPA and Dr. Robertson discussed an ongoing study involving six different sensor manufacturers and 700 2-year-olds.
- (7) Monthly Financial Report: Fiscal officer Sherry White stated that we are \$136,000 ahead due to the increased casino revenues, which help in balancing a 7% reduction in tax revenues. Last year there was a 13% reduction in tax revenues. Tax revenues are not a reliable source of funding due to all the different options for gambling. Payroll costs are up 4%. Veterinary costs have increased 9%, and Steward expenses have increased slightly.
- (8) Adjudication: Commissioner Simpson moved to hear the adjudication of Betty Joe Clegg, and Commissioner Winters

seconded the motion. The Commission reviewed the Report and Recommendation of the Hearing Officer and the objection filed by Clegg. The Commission listened to the comments of Assistant Attorney General Todd DeBoe. In addition, Clegg and her attorney both spoke, with Clegg answering the commissioner's questions. The Commission voted unanimously to confirm and approve the Hearing Officer's Report and Recommendation which upheld the Northfield 2024-NFLD-287 ruling.

- (9) Commissioners' Comments: Commissioner Simpson mentioned long-time Ohio-based 70-year-old Perry Ouzts, who recently rode his 7,500th winner at Belterra Park. He holds the record for being the oldest rider to win a race in North America and ranks fifth in all-time wins in North America.
- (10) Public Comments: There were no public comments.
- (11) Executive Session: There was no executive session.
- (12) Adjournment: Commissioner Simpson moved to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Winters seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote, and the Commission meeting was adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Date, Time, and Place of Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 15, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 1948 Riffe Center

Plan to join us!

There is nothing like being here in person to see history in the making!



2024 Champion – Captain Albano (Todd McCarthy) 1:50.1

Delaware, Ohio's Grand Circuit Events

----- Featuring The -----

80th Little Brown Jug (Thursday, September 18) and
the 55th Jugette (Wednesday, September 17)



Check out the new
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Reserve Seats

Grandstand Seats (Thursday) – Starting at \$30 each

Box Seats (All Week) – Starting at \$80 each

Hospitality Tents – *Includes drinks, buffet lunch, TVs and more*

Backstretch Tent -- Jugette Day \$60 – Jug Day \$100

Top Of The Stretch Tent -- Jugette Day \$60 – Jug Day \$100

Pavilion Hill – Jugette Day \$180 – Jug Day \$265 – Both Days \$375

To purchase tickets, please call us at (740) 362-3851 or
(800) DEL-FAIR. Visit us at DelawareCountyFair.com
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