

Buckeye Harness Bulletin

September 11, 2026



SIRES STAKES

Golden Anniversary

Eight OSS Championships Up for Grabs in Milestone Season

Beginning all the way back on May 2, the milestone 50th season of the Ohio Sires Stakes has been a memorable one. Champions will be crowned on Saturday (Sept. 12) with eight \$300,000 divisions on tap as part of a 16-race card at Eldorado Scioto Downs. First-race post time is 5:25 p.m., and the Ohio Harness Horsemen's Association will begin its live streaming coverage of Super Night on its YouTube channel at approximately 6:15 p.m. just ahead of the first OSS event of the evening. Storylines abound in all eight divisions headlined by sophomore colt trotter Big Ranger and sophomore filly trotter Setyoursightshigh looking to repeat as OSS champions. Hear more from Big Ranger owner Madison Global's Anthony Miller and Wes Beachy on pages 2-4, and catch up with Canadian horseman Neil MacInnis on pages 5-7 to learn more about his entry in the sophomore filly pace division, Rhodena Blue. For starters, the morning-line favorites in each race are listed below.

3-Year-Old Colt Trot: Big Ranger (8-5)

3-Year-Old Colt Pace: Tsunami Seas (3-1)

2-Year-Old Colt Trot: Debt Free (9-5)

2-Year-Old Colt Pace: Jett James (5-2)

3-Year-Old Filly Trot: Chip Shot (2-1)

3-Year-Old Filly Pace: Seaside Shuffle (5-2)

2-Year-Old Filly Trot: Made For More (5-2)

2-Year-Old Filly Pace: Tempting Flames (9-5)



'A Dream Come True'

Big Ranger's Connections Eye Second Straight OSS Championship



Big Ranger with driver Tim Tetrick at Eldorado Scioto Downs on June 13

By Wes Mayberry

Big Ranger's connections couldn't have asked much more from him during his freshman season in 2025. He won all seven of his starts and banked \$370,610 and finished the year as an Ohio Sires Stakes champion, Ohio Triple Crown winner, and the Ohio Horse of the Year. Though his perfect record is no longer intact, his sophomore campaign has been another huge success.

"It has been a very successful, very exciting season so far," says Anthony Miller, of the Madison Global group that owns Big Ranger. "Right off the bat, he had a couple races that could've gone a little better. But he seems to be doing very well now."

Miller is joined by Wes Beachy, Reuben Hershberger,

and Benjamin Shrock in the Madison Global group based in Dundee, Ohio. Following Big Ranger's success as a freshman, they wanted to see how he would fare at the Grand Circuit level as a sophomore this year and have been pleased with the results. In his first start of 2026 — the James K. Hackett Memorial Final — the son of In Range out of Big Blue Bird made an early break and finished last. But he has five wins and one second in eight starts on the year while banking \$402,337. And he isn't finished.

Big Ranger is one of nine sophomore colt trotters vying for an Ohio Sires Stakes title in this milestone 50th season of the series as Scioto Downs hosts all eight \$300,000 divisions of the Scarlet Championships as part of a 16-race card on Saturday (Sept. 12) starting at 5:25 p.m. While he drew the unfavorable nine hole,



Big Ranger with driver Tim Tetrick at Eldorado Scioto Downs on July 18

he is the prohibitive morning-line favorite at 8-5 ahead of 7-2 second choice Tom Largo, who will leave from the rail.

A win on Saturday would add to an already successful campaign that includes a win in the \$75,000 Oak Grove Trotting Derby Consolation, a victory in two \$75,000 legs of the OSS, and a triumph in a \$20,000 leg of the Buckeye Stallion Series. Those results were highlighted by his record performances in the OSS at Scioto Downs. His 1:51.2 mile in the second leg was a track record, and he subsequently lowered it in the third leg with a mark of 1:50.3.

“To see a trotter go that fast is always a thrill, and it’s even more so when it happens to be yours,” Beachy says.

But the true thrill came in the Hambletonian at the Meadowlands last month. Driven by Tim Tetrick, Big Ranger won his Hambletonian Elimination race in a stakes-record 1:50 and went on to feature in one of the most exciting finishes in Hambletonian Final history. Racing for a \$1 million purse, Big Ranger was side by side with Apex nearing the finish line, and the two horses tripped the wire in a photo finish in a stakes-record 1:49.2. After several minutes, Apex was declared the winner by the slimmest of margins. Despite the defeat, it was an experience that Miller and Beachy will never forget.

“The emotions were definitely high in a good way,” Beachy says. “Being able to take family and friends and have the race go like it went was amazing. It was beyond anything I had ever experienced.”

“Just being there in that atmosphere with that caliber of horses was a great experience,” Miller adds. “Of course, we would’ve loved to have won it, but that finish with them coming down to the wire like that will always be one of my favorite memories. My heart was beating so fast, and I wasn’t sure who had won. I’ll never forget that feeling. We were second by the slimmest of margins, but I’m still very proud of the horse. He definitely showed that he can compete at that level.”

Big Ranger hasn’t raced since the Hambletonian on Aug. 8 but is well positioned for Saturday’s OSS Championship based on conversations with trainer Anette Lorentzon.

“I talked to her a few days ago, and she said he seems to be doing very well,” Miller says. “She sent me a video of him jogging on Wednesday, and he looked really good.”

With Tetrick back in the bike, all eyes will be on Big Ranger as he looks to repeat as an OSS champion on Saturday. But his connections know the field contains several talented competitors. Tom Largo (Chris Lems) is perhaps chief among them, as the Long Tom gelding scored wins in four of the five legs of the OSS as part of a 6-5-0 record in 11 starts with earnings of \$224,850 on the year. He finished four and three-quarters lengths behind Big Ranger in their third-leg matchup, but both Beachy and Miller know to never assume a victory.

“There are a lot of good quality horses in that field, and you can’t count your chickens before they hatch,”

Beachy says. “I would not dare assume that it’s a guaranteed win.”

“I definitely think Big Ranger can win it, but anything can happen on any given night,” Miller adds.

They’ll enter Saturday’s race with no expectations of victory, but they’re hoping to leave Scioto Downs with what would be a very meaningful back-to-back OSS champion in Big Ranger.

“It’s in Ohio and kind of at his home track, so it would be very nice to win it,” Beachy says.

Miller agrees.

“To do it two years in a row would be a dream come true,” he says.

A preview of each of the remaining divisions of colts is below.

Sophomore Colt Pacers

Tsunami Seas (David Miller) opened as the 3-1 favorite after drawing the rail and will leave alongside 7-2 second choice When Is Parade (Ronnie Wrenn Jr.) in post two. Tsunami Seas is a Downbytheseaside gelding trained by Virgil Morgan Jr. for owners Jeffrey Rector, Larry Wills, and Hutchison Harness. He has five wins in 11 seasonal starts, including a victory in the fifth leg of the OSS. He owns a career record of 6-8-1 in 18 starts with \$130,707 in earnings and a lifetime mark of 1:49.1. When Is Parade, also a winner in the fifth leg, is trained by Ron Burke. Up In Place (Tetrick), a Marvin Luna trainee with three OSS wins this year, is 6-for-6 this season and opened with 4-1 odds after drawing post seven.

Freshman Colt Trotters

Three Ready For Moni geldings — Iluvmymoni,

Mind On My Moni, and Debt Free — highlight the freshman colt trot division as three-leg winners. Debt Free (Wrenn Jr.) opened as the 9-5 favorite and will leave from post three. The Ready For Moni gelding is trained by Vernon Beachy for owners 518 Group, Gitup Racing, Ryan Smith, and Todd’s Auto. He has hit the board in all six seasonal starts with four wins, one second, and one third to go with \$158,750 in earnings. His OSS victories came in the third, fourth, and fifth legs, the latter of which was in a lifetime mark of 1:54.1. Stablemate Mind On My Moni (Mike Wilder) and Steve Carter trainee Iluvmymoni (David Miller) opened as the co-second choice at 5-2 and will leave from posts two and one, respectively. Mind On My Moni set a new track record of 1:53.3 at Scioto Downs in the third leg of the OSS, and Iluvmymoni’s 1:54.3 in the fourth leg was a track record and world record for freshman gelded trotters on a half-mile track.

Freshman Colt Pacers

Don’ttruckwithme, Night Surfer, and Jett James scored three wins apiece through five legs of the OSS this year. Jett James (Brett Miller) opened as the favorite at 5-2 after drawing post four. The Monte Miki gelding is owned and trained by Adam Short. He has a 5-1-2 record in eight seasonal starts with \$154,185 in earnings. His lifetime mark of 1:51.1 came in the fourth leg of the OSS in between victories in the third and fifth legs. Morgan Jr. trainee Night Surfer (Luke Hanners) is the 3-1 second choice and will leave from the far outside. Don’ttruckwithme (Lems), trained by Daren Harvey, drew post three and opened with 7-2 odds.



Tom Largo with driver Chris Lems at Northfield Park on Aug. 24

'We're Ecstatic'

Rhodena Blue's Connections Have High Hopes for OSS Championship Race



Rhodena Blue with driver Tyler Smith at Eldorado Scioto Downs on July 4

By Wes Mayberry

Entering the 2026 season, Neil MacInnis could only hope to be at Eldorado Scioto Downs for the Ohio Sires Stakes Scarlet Championships. As it turns out, that's exactly where he'll be on Saturday (Sept. 12) to watch Rhodena Blue race for an OSS title on Ohio Super Night.

"The foundation of anything you do in this industry is hope, and we were hopeful that we would culminate to this," says MacInnis, who trains Rhodena Blue and co-owns her with his daughter, Rory. "We're ecstatic that this opportunity has happened, but at the same time, we were hopeful from the beginning that this would be a possibility, and we prepared for it. I managed her racing all summer long with the idea and the hope that we'd be here, and here we are."

Rhodena Blue is one of nine sophomore filly pacers vying for a title in this milestone 50th season of the OSS as Scioto Downs hosts all eight \$300,000 divisions of the Scarlet Championships as part of a 16-race card starting at 5:25 p.m. For Neil and Rory, who live

near Toronto, Ontario, Canada, the long trips to Ohio have paid off.

"This is the culmination of what Rory and I have done together and what it means for us and our growth. This is hard work, and getting to this point shows the fruits of our labor," Neil says. "I will be especially thinking of my dad, Frank, who passed away in March. He was the reason I'm into horse racing, and he would have been so looking forward to this."

The journey to Saturday's race started back on May 8 when MacInnis and driver James MacDonald came away impressed with Rhodena Blue's performance at Woodbine Mohawk Park. She was in ninth place and trailed the leader by more than 12 lengths at the halfway mark before charging up the field to finish second.

"The first thing James said when he came off the bike was, 'Not many fillies can do what she just did.' So I knew I had something there," MacInnis remembers.

With Tyler Smith in the bike, Rhodena Blue won a Buckeye Stallion Series race at Scioto Downs on June



Neil and Rory MacInnis with Rhodena Blue and her Shetland pony companion, Queenie

5, this time coming from sixth place and seven lengths back at the halfway mark. That's when MacInnis decided to give her a shot against better competition in the OSS. That decision paid off, as the Lather Up filly once again put her closing speed on display. Driven by Smith, she trailed the leader by over eight lengths and was in seventh place at the half but won by three-quarters of a length in 1:52 at Scioto Downs on July 4.

"That confirmed that what happened before wasn't a one-off and that I had a horse with a real determination to race," MacInnis says. "I credit that to the work my daughter and I did in bringing her along and teaching her to race."

Prior to the next OSS race on Aug. 28 at Scioto Downs, Smith cautioned MacInnis about being too aggressive with a spot in the final likely secured. MacInnis agreed with the strategy, and Smith had Rhodena Blue in last place at the halfway mark before letting her put her signature late surge on display. That time, however, it was only good enough for a fourth-place

finish as the top four horses were separated by just one-fifth of a second at the line.

"Tyler waited and came charging at the end, and I thought she was second in that race," MacInnis says. "That's when I knew that she's as legitimate as any other filly in that race."

Looking ahead to Saturday, Rhodena Blue opened with 10-1 odds after drawing the seven hole with Trevor Smith tabbed to drive. Though far from the early favorite, her past performances are proof that you can never count her out.

"We're hoping for some speedy fractions, and that may very well play into her racing style," MacInnis says.

Seaside Shuffle (Chris Page) is the 5-2 morning-line favorite and will leave from post five. Other top competitors include Sassy By The Sea (Tyler Smith, 7-2), a three-time OSS winner this season, as well as Rodeo Dancer (Brett Miller, 9-2) and Seaside Charm (Ronnie

Wrenn Jr., 9-2). It's certainly a talented field, but MacInnis is confident that Rhodena Blue is prepared.

"I don't have a track, so her training regimen takes her through fields and up and down hills over long stretches. She jogged Monday and Tuesday between eight and 10 miles over fairly rugged ground," he says.

"Her biggest attribute is that last burst, so my training thoughts were preparing her strength and endurance to be ready to strike at the end."

MacInnis says a victory on Saturday would be a huge blessing for him and his daughter, who celebrated her 11th birthday on Monday.

"I can't say enough about the involvement of my daughter — the growth and maturity she has for an 11-year-old is absolutely striking," he says. "She's involved 50% on training decisions, and she's wise beyond her years."

With the journey he and his daughter have been on with Rhodena Blue, MacInnis knows they both will come away feeling victorious no matter what place the filly finishes.

"It would be a blessing to show well, but for us, the victory happened quite a while back when my daughter and I started on this journey with the people we've met along the way," he says. "I'm just a small-time grassroots guy who started with the ultimate dream. What could be better than this?"

A preview of each of the remaining divisions of fillies is below.

Sophomore Filly Trotters

Chip Shot (Wrenn Jr.) opened as the 2-1 favorite for trainer Vernon Beachy and owners John Schlabach and Walnut View Farm. The Mission Accepted filly scored wins in the fourth and fifth legs of the OSS in matching 1:54.2 miles, which is a lifetime best. She has sev-

en wins and \$112,538 in earnings in 14 lifetime starts and will leave from post five. Sarah's Mission (Page) is the 7-2 second choice. The Ron Burke trainee will leave from post two.

Freshman Filly Trotters

Made For More (Wrenn Jr.) is the 5-2 morning-line favorite after drawing the rail. The Beachy trainee is a two-time winner in the OSS this season, recording victories in the third and fourth legs. The Long Tom filly is owned by Schlabach and has hit the board in all seven seasonal starts with four wins and three seconds to go with \$208,500 in earnings. Her lifetime mark of 1:54.1 came in the third leg of the OSS. Marcus Melander trainee Blue Ranger (Aaron Merriman) opened as the 3-1 second choice and will leave from post five. Secrets Ilia (Brett Miller), a Micah Miller trainee with three OSS wins this season, will leave from post eight.

Freshman Filly Pacers

Despite drawing the far outside post, Tempting Flames (David Miller) opened as the prohibitive favorite at 9-5 ahead of 3-1 second choice Cleveland Darby (Page). Tempting Flames is a four-time winner in the OSS this season, and her lifetime mark of 1:50 in the fourth leg at Scioto Downs was a track record for sophomore filly pacers and equaled the world record for that division on a five-eighths mile track. Owned by William Hartt and trained by Michael Hitchcock, she has hit the board in all seven seasonal starts with five wins and two seconds while banking \$228,100. Cleveland Darby is trained by Burke and will leave from post seven. Joe Bongiorno trainee Party Up (Luke Hanners) is a three-time OSS winner and the lone horse to defeat Tempting Flames in the series this year. The Lather Up filly will leave from post six.



*Rhodena Blue and her connections in the winner's circle at Eldorado Scioto Downs on June 5
Credit: Conrad Photo*

2026 New All-Age Track Records at Ohio Fairs

Pacing

Circleville - Burnout, 1:56
Bellefontaine - Gypsy's Brother, 1:56.1
Mount Vernon - Gypsy's Brother, 1:55.2
Marysville - Fired Up Henry L, 1:54.3
Sidney - Ants Marching, 1:56
Athens - Gc's Legend, 1:56.1
Celina - Ants Marching, 1:52.3
Zanesville - Hunka Hunka, 1:56
Napoleon - Woodrow Blue Chip, 1:56.3
Lima - Carbine, 1:54.3
Woodsfield - Gc's Legend, 1:55
Canton - Stoke The Fire, 1:57
Findlay - Carbine, 1:55.1
Canfield - Charlie May, 1:53.1
Kenton - Heerzadiamondstud, 1:55.4

Trotting

Bucyrus - Lynn Range, 1:58
Athens - Out Of Range, 1:59
Berea - Where Theres Smoke, 1:59.4
Napoleon - Macmorris Hanover, 1:59.3
Wellington - Macmorris Hanover, 1:58
Woodsfield - Out Of Range, 1:59
Findlay - Jefferson Hanover, 1:58.2
Marietta - Lady Lena, 2:00.1
Wauseon - Macmorris Hanover, 1:56.2
Kenton - Tango L, 1:57

Ohio Fair Racing - Upcoming Schedule

Dates and start times subject to change

Friday, Sept. 11

Morgan County Fair (McConnelsville, OH), 1 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 12

Morgan County Fair (McConnelsville, OH), 1 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 14

Guernsey County Fair (Old Washington, OH), 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 15

Wayne County Fair (Wooster, OH), 12 p.m.

Wyandot County Fair (Upper Sandusky, OH), 5 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 16

Wayne County Fair (Wooster, OH), 12 p.m.

Guernsey County Fair (Old Washington, OH), 1 p.m.

Williams County Fair (Montpelier, OH), 1 p.m.

Wyandot County Fair (Upper Sandusky, OH), 5 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 20

Delaware County Fair (Delaware, OH), 1 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 21

Delaware County Fair (Delaware, OH), 1 p.m.

Ashland County Fair (Ashland, OH), 12 p.m. & 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 22

Delaware County Fair (Delaware, OH), 1 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 23

Delaware County Fair (Delaware, OH), 11 a.m.

Thursday, Sept. 24

Delaware County Fair (Delaware, OH), 11 a.m.

Friday, Sept. 25

Tuscarawas County Fair (Dover, OH), 11 a.m.

Saturday, Sept. 26

Tuscarawas County Fair (Dover, OH), 11 a.m.

Monday, Oct. 5

Montgomery County Fair (Dayton Raceway), 2/4 p.m.

Coshocton County Fair (Coshocton, OH), 4 p.m.