

Buckeye Harness Bulletin

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Getting Better with Age

At 7 Years Old, OSS Veteran Champion Abbey D Having Best Season Yet



Abbey D and driver Dan Noble win the 2026 Ohio Sires Stakes Veteran Mare Trot Championship at Northfield Park on Oct. 4. See story on pages 2-3

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By Wes Mayberry

Like a fine wine, 7-year-old Uncle Peter trotting mare Abbey D continues to get better with age.

“I heard a lot of stories about her back in her younger days when she was a little crazy, but that has gone away,” says Russell Swartz, who trains Abbey D with his wife, Deborah. “Back when I first got her, she always acted a little uptight. But now, she’s relaxed and doesn’t get too excited about much of anything.”

Abbey D first arrived at the Swartz’s stable in Urbana, Ohio, as a 5-year-old in June 2024 after Bradley DeLaney, of Wilmington, purchased her from a pair of New England-based owners in Triple D Stables and Thomas Ceraso Jr. Up to that point, she had 13 wins in 64 career starts and earnings of \$227,646. But her new trainers thought she had even greater potential.

“She just never looked like she was clicking and acted like she was tired, so we ended up turning her out for the summer and brought her back and got her ready,” Swartz says.

That intuition proved sound. As a member of the Swartz stable, Abbey D has gone on to amass 23

victories and \$356,195 in earnings in 81 starts. And this year is proving to be her best season yet, as her 10 wins and \$174,685 in earnings are both seasonal highs for her six-year career.

“Phenomenal,” Swartz says, describing Abbey D’s 2026 season. “You couldn’t ask her to be any more on key. We are just so blessed to have her.”

Coming off a nine-win 2025 season in which she banked \$124,440, Abbey D had a relatively inauspicious start to her 2026 campaign. In her first 10 starts, all at Miami Valley Raceway, she hit the board four times with just one win. But she won her next three starts to gain some positive momentum as the Miami Valley meet came to a close.

Her first Open-level win of the year came on June 20 at Circleville, and she added another on July 26 at Northfield Park. After finishing fourth in the Ohio State Fair Stake at Eldorado Scioto Downs on July 31, she raced in five Open events at Northfield, winning two, in the lead-up to the \$100,000 Ohio Sires Stakes Veteran Championships.

“I hate to go all that way because that’s a 12- to 15-hour day just to race one horse, but it’s worth it to take



Abbey D stands with Deborah and Russell Swartz at the Swartz’s stable at the Champaign County Fairgrounds in Urbana.

her up there because she does well and keeps making money,” Swartz says of Abbey D’s success at Northfield.

Back at Northfield for the OSS Veteran Championships on Oct. 4, Abbey D was paired with driver Dan Noble for what Swartz hoped would be another successful trip to the northeast Ohio track. She drew post three and went off as the betting favorite in a field that also included 2024 Ohio Horse of the Year Sugar Instead, 2025 Ohio 3-Year-Old Filly Trotter of the Year Jailhouse Pearl, and 2025 Ohio Aged Trotting Mare of the Year Jurassic Hattie. Despite some highly decorated competition, Swartz agreed with the bettors in making Abbey D the favorite.

“There were a couple other horses in there that had been racing really well, but with her drawing inside of them, I thought that as long as she got off the gate on the right foot, it would probably be over,” he says.

She proved him right, leading gate to wire en route to winning by three and three-quarters lengths in 1:54.2 to become the 2026 OSS Veteran Mare Trot champion.

“As a trainer, that was my first championship win — I

had tears in my eyes,” Swartz remembers, adding that Noble and Abbey D seem to be a special pairing.

“Danny had never even pulled her earplugs. That tells me that she was well within herself and ready to go again,” he says. “Danny doesn’t even have to move in the bike, and she just goes for him. Why that is, I don’t know, but I’m going to say it’s his hands because I think he has an incredible set of hands, and he can make a horse do things that you wouldn’t ever think it could do.”

Ultimately, though, the credit goes to the horse.

“She’s really willing to do whatever you want her to do, and the tougher the trip, the better she goes,” Swartz says. “She just loves her job.”

That job is expected to continue beyond this season. And if recent history is any indication, there’s plenty more success in Abbey D’s future.

“She’s sound — she doesn’t really have any serious issues of any kind, so I look for her to race for at least another year or two,” Swartz says. “She’s an incredible mare.”

Breeders Crown Charity Challenge Begins Friday at Scioto Downs

By Eldorado Scioto Downs

The Breeders Crown Charity Challenge (BCCC), presented by Prolific Equine, is full steam ahead leading into the Breeders Crown eliminations weekend (Oct. 16-17).

A representative from each of the four local charities will team up with their driver in a double-seated jog cart race, held after the third race, on Friday (Oct. 16). The winner will get 100 points, second place 75, third place 50, and fourth place 25.

The teams, who each have a Facebook page to help spread the word about BCCC, are: (1) driver Austin Hanners and the Ronald McDonald House; (2) driver Chris Page and Folds Of Honor; (3) driver David Miller and Make-A-Wish Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana; and (4) driver Ronnie Wrenn Jr. and the Greater Columbus Sports Foundation.

The more engagement each Facebook page generates, the more points are accumulated for the charity. The amount of money each charity receives at the end

of the BCCC is dependent on the amount of points earned.

Also on Friday evening, charity representatives will be participating in a handicapping contest using Scioto’s Last Man Standing format and harness racing bingo to earn more points.

The BCCC began in 2019 and raises funds for charities in the Breeders Crown host community. The 2026 Breeders Crown will be held at Scioto Downs in Columbus on Oct. 16-17 (eliminations) and 23-24 (finals). More details about racing for the next two weekends can be found on the Scioto Downs website. Seating reservations are available on Open Table. Live racing starts at 6 p.m. each day.

For more information about the BCCC and how you can be involved to support these local charities, contact Jason Roth at jroth@caesars.com or Jessica Otten at jmotten97@gmail.com.

2026 Ohio Fairs Champions - Pacers

3-Year-Old Colt Pace Fired Up Henry L



Owners: LeVan Stables, Megan LeVan
Breeder: Foulk Stables **Trainer:** Hank LeVan
Driver: Chris Page

3-Year-Old Filly Pace Vh Goldie



Owner: William Thomas **Breeder:** Edward Miller
Trainer: David Young II **Driver:** Dan Noble



2-Year-Old Colt Pace Thee Town Buckeye



Owner: Michael Fletcher **Breeder:** Winback Farm
Trainer: Craig Bowman **Driver:** Jason Beattie

2-Year-Old Filly Pace Seaside Masquerade



Owner: Amelia Smith **Breeder:** Lmn Bred Stables
Trainer: Randy Smith **Driver:** Alex Hawk

2026 Ohio Fairs Champions - Trotters

3-Year-Old Colt Trot Out Of Range



Owner: James Crawford IV **Breeders:** Greenfield Equine, Creps Stable, Marjen Breeding
Trainer: Steve Carter **Driver:** Chris Page

3-Year-Old Filly Trot Flirtin Tomi



Owners: Jay Burkholder, Joseph Burkholder
Breeder: Perry Coblenz **Trainer:** Herman Hagerman **Driver:** Ronnie Wrenn Jr.



2-Year-Old Colt Trot Krazy Caviar



Owners: Heartland Acres, Rosy Weaver
Breeder: Martin Yoder **Trainer:** Rosy Weaver
Driver: Sam Widger

Note: The 2-year-old filly trot division was declared a no-contest following an on-track equipment failure.

Congratulations!

MacDonald Scores First Career Driving Victory



Amy MacDonald, of Brunswick, Ohio, recorded her first career driving win on Oct. 14, guiding 9-year-old Andover Hall gelding Manhattanup No Ice to victory in the Great Lakes Amateur Driving Series Trot in 1:58. It was the fifth career start for MacDonald, who was driving for trainer Edward Miller, who owns Manhattanup No Ice with Ashley Miller.

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
Lancaster - Carbine, 1:57

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
Lancaster - Jefferson Hanover, 1:59.2