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The *Saratoga*

Special

Saratoga's Racing Newspaper since 2001



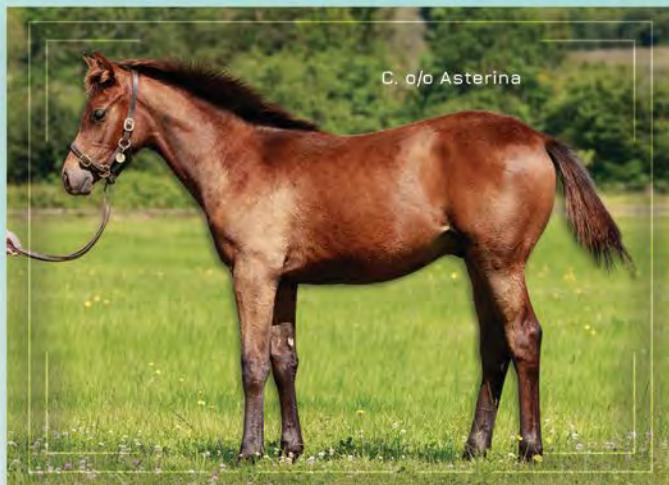
Phil Serpe Stable Tour
Brown's filly lands Lake Placid
NY-bred Showcase Preview

Slammer

Malathaat gets revenge in Alabama score

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WEANLINGS IN NOVEMBER!



Tide Turned. Malathaat avenges her defeat in the Coaching Club American Oaks with an Alabama win Saturday.

Tod Marks

Here&There...in Saratoga

LICENSE PLATES OF THE DAY

NY FILLY, Florida. FILLY FAN, New York.

BY THE NUMBERS

6: Consecutive races won by the Todd Pletcher barn at Saratoga Aug. 20-22. The streak started Friday with a win by Mr. Briggs in the first race and Gimme Some Mo in the seventh. Saturday, Pletcher again won the first and seventh with Major General and My Prankster, respectively, and then watched star 3-year-old filly Malathaat take down the Grade 1 Alabama. Pletcher opened Sunday by winning the first, with Goddess Of Fire, but the streak ended a race later when Five Prizes finished sixth in the second race. The only Pletcher runners to lose over those three days, Napa Valley and Bellinger, did so in races the barn won with other horses. The trainer comes into the seventh week of the season with 21 wins (just behind Mike Maker, 23, and Chad Brown, 22).

6: Sets of goggles worn by Jose Ortiz aboard Crazy Beautiful in the Alabama Saturday.

22: Bags of cans and bottles to be recycled outside Barclay Tagg's barn Tuesday morning.

92: Text messages sent to trainer Phil Serpe minutes after WellSpring Stable's Safe Conduct won Sunday's Queen's Plate at Woodbine.

2,549: Feet of Mount Mansfield's 4,393 hiked by The Special's Joe Clancy, Sean Clancy, Tom Law and Cc Larner (and Katie the Labrador) to the summit Sunday afternoon.

5: Horses to sweep the Lake George and Lake Placid stakes at Saratoga: Memories Of Silver (1996), Tenski (1998), Proctor's Ledge (2017), Regal Glory (2019) and Technical Analysis (2021). The first won the Lake Placid when it was the Nijana while she and Tenski won divisions of the Lake George. Regal Glory won the Lake Placid in a dead heat.



NAMES OF THE DAY

Beckenbauer, fifth race. The 4-year-old gelding is by Bayern, club team of German soccer star Franz Beckenbauer from 1964-77.

Just Right, seventh race. The 5-year-old New York-bred gelding, now racing for Dream Maker Racing but bred by Barry Schwartz and Andrew Rosen, is out of Perfect Package.

Dark Money, seventh race. The 5-year-old New York-bred gelding, a nine-time winner now with owner/trainer Eduardo Jones but bred by Cedar Meadow Farm, is by Central Banker out of Candelabra.

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Connie Bush

Mud Men. Manny Franco and Villainous wear the dirt of a fourth here in the mud last week. Here's to cleaner horses, and jockeys, the rest of the way.

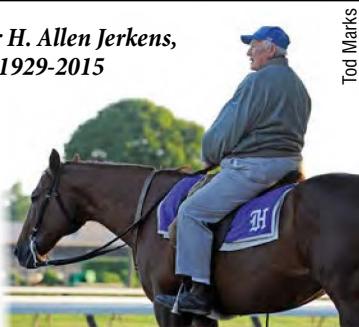
The Chief

Trainer H. Allen Jerkens,
1929-2015

Tod Marks

"We've done all we could do. It's funny how you try to do the same thing when you were lucky, but sometimes, maybe you shouldn't. She worked a real good work before the stake, at Belmont, it was early in the morning when the track was good. She worked good here, not quite as fast, I don't think the track was that fast, but she worked good. I didn't want to put the jock on her, because she's been happy with the other boy who gets on her every day."

**About Emma's Encore,
before winning the Prioress**



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Here&There...in Saratoga

WORTH REPEATING

"The Clancys. Let me make a comment about the Clancys that were afraid to drive all the way to Saratoga last summer, there were no monsters. Tom survived. Tom and I were here. The bad thing about the Clancys not being here was the Clancys not being here. The good thing was I saved \$200 on beer because I only had to get two six packs for Tom and not eight cases for the Clancys. It was a win-win situation."

Trainer Phil Serpe, wrapping up his annual Stable Tour Tuesday morning

"It's fantastic, that's how they ought to do it. Exactly like it says, showcase them."

Trainer Tom Bush on Friday's Saratoga Showcase card for New York-breds

"I think it's going to be me and Todd [Pletcher]. The last two weeks, the home-track guys are going to be the ones. I think this time of year, the final couple weeks of the meet, Todd and I are going to show our depth."

Chad Brown, on the race for the Saratoga trainers' championship

"You'd never guess I only do this part time."

Exercise rider Susie Alexander when told 'You still got it' Tuesday morning

"That's what I do."

Dick Knapp when told a guy comes to Saratoga to wander around in the morning and watch races in the afternoon

"I'm relegated to dog training."

Bill Mott, while walking Winston Tuesday morning

"It's all a blur."

Exercise rider Neil Poznansky when asked about his career as a jockey

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Look, you don't get do-overs. We talked about a plan and he went ahead and went that way. It didn't turn out the way we had hoped, but you regroup."

Trainer Todd Pletcher about a plan with John Velazquez to be aggressive in the CCA Oaks with Malathaat



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Here&There...in Saratoga

"Horses like this remind me of the last line in Paul Mellon's tribute to Mill Reef: 'Though small, I gave my all. I gave my heart.'"

Davant Latham after reading about Praise The Prince in The Special

"As a small breeding player I had great sales results in Saratoga. Thanks to Sarah Sutherland at Indian Creek and Jamie Lamonica at The Stallion Company. Sue Vitro introduced me to these folks the year before she died."

Owner/breeder John Lauriello

"I tell everybody it's really expensive to stay there now because they put a sign up: 'Harry Rice slept here.'"

NYRA valet Harry Rice, on the cost of rooms at the Brunswick Bed and Breakfast

"Like the fish, it grows with each telling."

Retired jockey Nick Santagata about a legendary fight in the jocks' room

"We already got it, we know where to find the hot press."

Jimmy Riccio, while holding The Special Saturday morning

"It's a privilege."

David Flores, 53, about riding a race at the meet

"When the adrenaline kicks in, it's magic."

Flores about riding a race

"It was like talking to Fargo, the accent."

The Special's Tom Law about an interview with a trainer from Assiniboia Downs who sounded a lot like former intern Annise "Fargo" Montplaisir



Tod Marks

Still Going. Whitney winner Knicks Go strolls through the Oklahoma stable area on the way to train Saturday morning.

JANE REACTION



Spectacular, undefeated and G1-bound. MIDSHIPMAN's Averly Jane adds Saratoga's Skidmore Stakes to her win in the Kentucky Juvenile. She's run the second-best Beyer by a juvenile filly this year. The G1 Darley Alcibiades next? Appropriate, that...

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With Phil Serpe

Phil Serpe likened Safe Conduct to Forrest Gump last year, bringing up the scene in the 1994 film “when the coaches go, ‘he’s stupider than something or other,’ and the other coach says, ‘yeah, but he sure can run.’”

We brought him a printout of the quote from last year’s Fasig-Tipton Stable Tour, Serpe read it from his usual spot in his director’s chair near the five-eighths pole on the main track, laughed and agreed.

“Forrest Gump. He really is. That was funny,” Serpe said.

Now, just like Tom Hanks’ hit movie, you can call Safe Conduct a classic. Better yet, classic winner.

Safe Conduct won Woodbine’s \$1 million Queen’s Plate Sunday, hanging on by a head to open the 2021 Canadian Triple Crown and give owners Robert and Laura Vukovich, Serpe and his team and jockey Irad Ortiz Jr. a victory in one of only six races on this continent recognized as a classic. Serpe watched it in his living room with his brother and sister-in-law, leaving the duties at Woodbine to Lisa Bartkowski out of Julia Carey’s barn.

“We had decided earlier that Lisa would go up. We don’t have many horses left in Florida so she was going to go up,” Serpe said. “Then we found out there was this big hold up on the renewals of passports. So, we weren’t sure. It went from she had submitted her stuff a month or so ago and then they told her that expediting it was going to be eight to 12 weeks.

“We have a friend up there, Julia Carey, so we had everything covered but it’s good to have a team member on board. Lisa’s passport showed up, miraculously, in the mailbox, I don’t know how. So she went and that made me feel better.”

Carrying the blue and gold colors of the Vukovich’s WellSpring Stable, Ortiz kept Safe Conduct just off the pace of Take A Chance through the opening 6 furlongs of the 10-furlong Queen’s Plate. The Bodemeister colt battled for the lead approaching the mile mark, turned for home in front, opened up and just held off Riptide Rock’s late rally on the extreme outside.

“Irada did an incredible job really. The one slot up there is not the most desirable place to break from,” Serpe said. “What’s amazing, he got excellent position without having to use that horse. It was pretty obvious he needed him late in the race.



Michael Burns

Safe Conduct (1) hangs on to win the Queen’s Plate for trainer Phil Serpe Sunday.

That’s why, that guy, to me he’s incredible. He’s relentless in his rides.”

Serpe fielded calls from friends far and wide, responded to texts and continued to accept congratulations from fellow trainers, exercise riders, van agents and just about anyone walking past his barn Tuesday morning.

“I know what a prestigious race that is, especially for the people in Canada, and I really feel bad that I didn’t go,” Serpe said. “I certainly don’t want anyone to think we didn’t want to. I did. We just had to figure out about this Covid thing. The border had just opened, we weren’t sure if it was going to be a problem getting back in. In fact Lisa, no sooner than she got there and got the horse put away, she had to go get a Covid test because they’re only good for 72 hours, so she could get back in the United States. Having me stuck up there wouldn’t have been good. I need to be here so we just decided that that’s how we’re going to do it. She knows enough about what she’s doing to take care of things.”

Back at the Saratoga barn, with the Blue Heaven sign hung high on a telephone pole in the courtyard, Safe Conduct shares space with several promising 2-year-olds and some veterans. Serpe has a win at the meet – King Angelo in a state-bred maiden Aug. 14 – and two seconds from just four starters.

“It’s a smaller bunch this year,” he said. “Unfor-

tunately, we’re kind of plagued by injuries in Florida this year. It’s just how things go. In this game it can be feast or famine. We were getting the famine side of it. We’re a little light on stock but have some nice 2-year-olds in the barn.

“We always come to Saratoga to run and it’s unusual when we don’t. Mike Lakow came to me and said, ‘man, you’re not running any horses, you always run.’ And I love to run up here. I’m fine with what’s going on in the barn but it’s kind of bugging me because we’re used to running. We love to run up here. It’s just the way the game is. Things just happen. I guess we shouldn’t complain too much because we won the Queen’s Plate. It wasn’t at Saratoga but it was during Saratoga, so we’ll take it.”

Serpe went through most of the string, including the big horse, with The Special’s Tom Law.

Safe Conduct: The classic winner. A maiden winner on the grass here last summer – three days before Serpe’s annual Stable Tour – Ontario-bred colt won the 10-furlong opening jewel of the Canadian Triple Crown as the 3-1 favorite by a head under Irad Ortiz Jr. WellSpring Stables bought him as a weanling for \$45,000 and he’s now won three of seven and \$603,202. “The only thing that went wrong was from when he won his allowance race at Belmont and jumping into the Pennine Ridge might have been a little bit quick. We also don’t

Continued On Page 7

Stable Tour —

Continued from page 6

know because it ended up coming up sloppy, we wanted to stay in the race because he's the kind of horse where you think, 'oh, he'll run through anything,' but we were just kidding ourselves really because it's rare to find a horse that runs on every surface. Then we went into the Belmont Derby. There were some really nice horses in there and it had rained. That turf was soft. Softer than we ever get there and he would not go anywhere on it.

"So, I held steady and got him ready. There was no doubt he was going to run good if he liked that synthetic track. Irad worked him the Friday before and his work was really good, but it was his gallop out that was sensational. He worked in like 1:01 and change but pulled up in 13 and change, 25 and change for the seven-eighths and he could have gone all the way around. You could see it. Yes, you're taking weight off with a jock riding him but he's doing it so easy. When we put him on that van I told Lisa, 'if you can get him off this van the way we put him on, you're in good shape.' It all worked out, which isn't always the case.

"He jogged once the wrong way on the track up there. Our original plan, way back when, was to send him up there 10 days out and let him breeze on it. But with all the stuff going on with Covid we changed that. With all the guys here and everybody I know that's run there, they ship in two days or the day before. That's what we were going to do the whole time.

"Now he's back. He's here and he's great. He came back the next day and we had him put away a little after noon. Thankfully it's not that long of a ride, maybe 6 ½ hours.

"As for what's next, we're just going to see how things are going with him. It's a wait and see thing with how he comes back."

Tizmet: WellSpring's 2-year-old daughter of Tiznow out of the Scat Daddy mare Por Favor breezed 5 furlongs on the Oklahoma turf in 1:04.85 Sunday, her sixth work in Saratoga. "Bred for turf. Probably going to sprint her first time out. A race for her is on September 2nd. She's been working well on the grass. She's going to be a nice filly. I don't know how nice but once she gets to run long. She's not going to be ready to run a mile and a sixteenth first time out so we'll go ahead and sprint her, get a little experience here and see what happens after that."

Bank On Anna. WellSpring's 2-year-old New York-bred Central Banker filly went through the ring at last year's Fasig-Tipton Select Yearling Showcase, returning not sold for \$46,000. "We really like her a lot. She had a nice work from the gate the other day. She'll run September 5."

Stannis: Another graduate of the Fasig-Tipton Kentucky sales ring, son of Cairo Prince



Tod Marks

Trainer Phil Serpe.

went through October yearling sale and was RNA for \$9,000. He's worked four times at Saratoga, including a half from the gate Aug. 15. "He's a nice big colt that's doing well. He's tall, still growing. I'm not real sure how to stamp him yet, we need to get a few more works in him. He's up to 5/8ths of a mile. We'll see how that goes.

Dancing With Rico: New York-bred 2-year-old War Dancer colt breezed four times this spring and summer at Belmont Park before going to the shelf. He made the trip to Saratoga. "He had bucked his shins so he's not going to get to run up here. He's a pretty nice colt. He'll make the races by the end of September for WellSpring."

Deptford Dancer. Hilly Fields Stable's homebred 2-year-old New York-bred War Dancer out of Ladywell Court shows five works on the Saratoga main track. "He's a half to Lady Joan, Goodbye Brockley. It's funny, that mare she just throws winners and they're runners. He's not going to make the races here but will be ready to run pretty quickly when we get down to Belmont. Just like his half-sisters, he's a little bit of a backward 2-year-old that is going to make it to the races as a 2-year-old but we expect to see a better horse as he gets a little older. That's how they were."

War Treasure: New York-bred 2-year-old colt by War Dancer out of the stakes-placed Raffle's Majesty mare Haldane. He's worked five times at Saratoga, including a half in :51.58 Aug. 15 on the main track. "He seems like he's OK. We're trying to make the races but he's a couple works short. He's another horse that will run down at Belmont. The rain unfortunately got a few of these horses backed up. We never want to risk anything going wrong. We don't have 100 horses and even if we did, we don't want to risk anything on these tracks. It's been tough some mornings, so we'll see what happens there."

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Stable Tour —

■ Continued from page 7

Ampersand: WellSpring's 3-year-old Speightster colt finished second in 6-furlong allowance here Aug. 7. He broke his maiden here last summer and ran fourth in the Grade 1 Hopeful 16 days later. "There's a horse that needed to grow a little bit. He's a registered Florida-bred that didn't like the climate in Florida too much. But young horses can do that to you sometimes down there. It's a different climate and they just don't like it. We took him off Lasix, he ran one good race down there and we just got him out of there, brought him up and he's been training well. He just didn't get a good break that day, but the winner went pretty easy. We were happy to see him come back and run well."

King Angelo. The Saratoga winner. Farone Stable's homebred 4-year-old Lemon Drop Kid colt won state-bred maiden going 5 ½ furlongs on the grass Aug. 14. "Everybody liked King Angelo last year. He was working here, working like gangbusters out of the gate. His owner, Tom Farone, is extremely, extremely careful with his horses and goes easy. He only wants them to run when they're absolutely ready to run. The thing with that horse, as soon as you see Lemon Drop Kid you say, 'oh, turf.' But look up Lemon Drop Kid's stats, he's got all these dirt horses. So Tom and I are going back-and-forth about turf versus dirt. I like the horse on the dirt and he ran really well. Now, because of timing issues and a foot bruise, he ended up back on the turf. He pretty much dominated that field. Numbers wise it looked like he would be hard to beat and he was. I can tell you this about him, I think he's a stakes-quality New York-bred and maybe beyond that. He's a really well built horse and he is fast. We're really excited. You go through all this



Queen's Plate Pedaler

Trainer Phil Serpe rode 32.43 miles on his road bike Friday to help raise \$2,000 for the TREK100 MACC Fund (Midwestern Athletes Against Childhood Cancer). Anyone interested in donating can go to maccfund.org/trek-100/ or drop a check off at Barn 22 made out to MACC. All proceeds go to the fund and are tax deductible.

stuff. We had him up north, we took him to Florida because Tom wanted him out of the bad weather. That was fine, if guys want to do that, I'm all for that, not banging on a horse too much over the winter. The timing, we always seemed to be not where we needed to be when the race came up. Now things have sort of fallen into place hopefully. He won pretty easily and his numbers are good. We're excited about running that horse in the future.

Tiple. Irish-bred 5-year-old mare won 5 ½-furlong allowance here last summer and has finished fourth and seventh in two starts this year for WellSpring. "Believe it or not, typical turf horse, she ran last the other day and got beat a length and three quarters. The thing about her is you can't get big works

out of her in the morning on the turf or the dirt. She's life or death to go in :50 or 1:04. She came into the stretch, she was getting a call, like fourth and right there and just kind of flattened out the last eighth or so. That didn't surprise me at all because, again, you've got to have a level of fitness. That was a two-other-than at Saratoga. You have to be tied on when you're in a race like that. She's going to run back here, back in a two-other-than and we expect her to run well. We just gave her some time off by design last year because she wasn't real fond of Florida. At 5 years old she popped a splint, so we had to stop on her. We're excited about her coming back."

Fuoco: Farone's homebred 4-year-old Artie Schiller colt made it to the races this spring at Belmont, finishing off the board in two starts. "He had to have a minor surgery. He's getting back to the races. He's a New York-bred. A little non-productive but he had some issues we needed to take care of. The jury is still out on his value but we're going to run him here Sept. 4."

Bernardino: A 6-year-old homebred son of Paddy O'Prado for Farone, he's winless in five starts with a second. Just returned to the worktab this month after being away for more than three months. "He's a neat old horse. Still a maiden at 6 but he's a cool old horse. He's one of those horses that unfortunately when he gets on top of things in races he'll have some issue come up with him, or something or other, that holds him up. Unfortunately, he won't make the races here but he'll run down at Belmont."

Sister Sophia: The veteran. Farone's homebred 9-year-old Tale Of The Cat mare has four wins in 18 starts and \$242,799 in earnings. Off since last November, she's back to galloping. "She's an old horse that Tom Farone just absolutely loves and wants to get back to the races. She had an injury last year. She's still a little ways away."

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TWITTER

Alan Carasso @EquinealTDN • Aug 22
Between them, @spendthriftfarm's Into Mischief (26, 2 Saturday) and the late Malibu Moon have combined for 49 @theTDN Rising Stars. Pretty crazy.

TWITTER

TDN @theTDN • Aug 21
Ain't Easy gave @spendthriftfarm's Into Mischief his second #TDNRisingStar of the day with her winning debut at @DelMarRacing for trainer @PhilDamatoff.

TWITTER

TDN @theTDN • Aug 21
My Prankster, a 2yo by @spendthriftfarm's Into Mischief, stormed home to #TDNRisingStar honors at Saratoga for @PletcherRacing.

TWITTER

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The @GaudetRacing-trained H P Moon, a son of @spendthriftfarm's late Malibu Moon, set the early pace and cruised home to #TDNRisingStar honors at @PimlicoRC.

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Dave Harmon

Malathaat stretches for the finish line of Saturday's Grade 1 Alabama.

Plan B

Pletcher, Velazquez, Malathaat win Grade 1 with new strategy

BY SEAN CLANCY

ALABAMA STAKES RECAP

Todd Pletcher raised his right hand in the air and held it there. One, two, three seconds. One, two, three strides. Part celebration and part vindication. Shadwell Stable's Malathaat and jockey John Velazquez provided both with a flawless performance in the Grade 1 Alabama Saturday at Saratoga.

Reversing tactics from an inside draw in the Coaching Club American Oaks, Velazquez allowed Malathaat to sit off the pace in the Alabama and the daughter of Curlin did the rest, sashaying to her sixth win in her seventh start. Clairiere, third in the CCA Oaks, finished 1 1/2 lengths back in second with Army Wife third. CCA Oaks winner Maracuja finished last of seven after 1 1/4 miles in 2:02.59.

Sitting in his customary clubhouse box seat, Pletcher watched in awe of a filly who has quickly etched her name in a deep roll of honor for the newly inducted Hall of Famer.

"I never compare one horse versus another and say, 'this one is the best we've ever had or that one is the best we've ever had,' but she is as good as we've ever had," Pletcher said.

Headly words.

Malathaat earned her third Grade 1 stakes win this season and most importantly erased, or at least lessened the sting of a take-on-all-comers head loss in the CCA Oaks. Asked how she took that loss, Pletcher didn't miss a beat.

"We didn't tell her she lost," Pletcher said.

And in a way, she didn't. Drawing the inside post in a pace-less four-horse field in the CCA Oaks July 24, Malathaat had everything against her from the beginning. When no one committed, Velazquez did and Mala-

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Alabama —

■ Continued from page 10

thaat stood at the stern while Rockpaperscissors, Clairiere and Maracuja took shots at her, forcing an opening quarter mile in :23.38, a half in :47.13 and three quarters of a mile in 1:11.02.

Pletcher blamed himself.

“I overthought it. I felt bad for her, just because I have so much respect for who she is, how much talent she has and how rare it is to come across one like her. I feel like it’s my job to not let her get beat so I blame myself for the wrong tactics,” Pletcher said. “If I had a do-over, I would not worry about the post, let her fall into position and do her thing. At the same time, you’ve got the best horse, you don’t want to be passive, it’s a catch 22. Just sad for her.”

Velazquez blamed the suicidal tactics of others.

“Different scenario and everybody rode like good riders. To tell you the truth, I was comfortable if they don’t chase her the last time, there was no speed, we go :23, :47, 1:11, what the



Tod Marks

Played Hard leads early in the Alabama as Malathaat (blue striped cap) waits to make her move.

hell was that? If you’re trying to beat a horse, you want to do it the right way, you don’t want to beat yourself and somebody else comes and gets you,” Velazquez said. “But you know what? That’s behind us, today was a better day. She had a race underneath her, she came back good and that’s what counts.”

Breaking from stall six of seven, Malathaat clawed and bobbled her first stride while Velazquez hovered, allowing for a quick recovery but a backward position in sixth as the field went past the wire for the first time. Established frontrunner Played Hard cleared four rivals but was engaged briefly by longshot Will’s Secret, step-

ping up the tempo on a :23.38 first quarter mile. Army Wife set up on the outside in third. Maracuja notched a spot in fourth as Clairiere shuffled off her quarter in sixth. Malathaat loped along on the outside in fifth with Crazy Beautiful last.

Continued On Page 14

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Alabama —

■ Continued from page 12

Played Hard continued to lope on the lead through a half in :49.12 as Will's Secret and Army Wife stayed close, bridging the gap between the frontrunner and the closers. Maracuja tracked them in fourth. Malathaat spied from fifth. Clairiere and Crazy Beautiful bided by their only plan from the back. Gliding into the turn, Velazquez began to rev the engine.

"By the time she gets to the backstretch, she relaxes a little too much, I have to get her going, little by little, little by little," Velazquez said. "By the three eighths pole, 'OK, come on mama, we gotta go.' I showed her the whip, tapped her on the shoulder, the belly and she was instantly right on it. I was pretty comfortable after that."

Like a man with a remote, a full fridge and an empty house.

Midway on the turn after three quarters in 1:13.27, Played Hard clung to a half-length lead on Will's Secret who had a half-length on Army Wife. With Velazquez asking but far from begging, Malathaat slid into the passing lane. Passing the quarter pole, Army Wife passed Played Hard and Will's Secret and offered a moment for an upset. Only a moment. Malathaat reached her at the eighth pole and had dispatched her by the sixteenth pole. Clairiere overcame a rough trip to nail Army Wife late for second as Malathaat received three open-handed thank-you pats from a jubilant Velazquez.

Pletcher and Velazquez have teamed up for decades, delivering high-pressured wins by high-powered horses. These days, the Hall of Famers don't team up as regularly as they once did, but only the frequency has changed.

"He's proven time and time again he's as good as anyone who's ever ridden," Pletcher said.

This one was good — make a plan, follow the plan, best horse wins. The Kentucky Oaks, when Malathaat bungled the break but still managed to find a forward spot and win by a neck, now, that

Hey Todd Pletcher, what's next for Malathaat?

"Rick Nichols and I talked about going to the Breeders' Cup off of this, give her a freshening. It's possible, we'll play it by ear. As far as colts go, that's later on. Hopefully she keeps in training next year."

was great.

"Unlike today's race and the Coaching Club where I didn't feel like I had a real clear idea of how the race was going to unfold, I felt like I had a really good idea of how the Kentucky Oaks was going to unfold," Pletcher said. "He and I spoke about a specific strategy, where we wanted to be, then she missed the break and he made that split-second decision. Instead of just going to Plan B, he decided to get to Plan A. He's got that one-second decision, three strides later she's where we wanted to be. He went and got the position we talked about, maybe someone not as confident would have said, 'Uh, oh, I can't get there now.'"

He — and she — got there that day and again in the Alabama.



Tod Marks

Malathaat checks out the crowd, and a rainbow.

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Big Shoes

Technical Analysis draws lofty comparison after Grade 2 score

BY JOE CLANCY

Trainer Chad Brown paid Technical Analysis a compliment after the 3-year-old Irish-bred filly dismantled five others in the Grade 2 Lake Placid Stakes at Saratoga Race Course Saturday.

"This horse is starting to remind me of a nice horse we used to train named Dayatthespa," said Brown of a New York-bred maiden winner at 2 who became an Eclipse Award winner at 5 by harnessing her energy and channeling it to the racetrack.

"A little busy mentally, early in her career, not really sure of her distance, a horse that pulled a little bit in her works, an aggressive type of horse, a busy horse like I like to call

LAKE PLACID STAKES RECAP

them," Brown said, rattling off similarities. "Over time, Dayatthespa really turned that busy-ness to speed as a weapon on the track. If you looked at Dayatthespa as a young horse you would say, 'What a stone miler that City Zip filly is.' Then when you looked at her 5-year-old year turning for home in the Breeders' Cup at a mile-and-a-quarter with her ears pricked she was long gone."

Technical Analysis has some road to travel before she matches Dayatthespa, who captured 11 of 18 starts, won three Grade 1 stakes and earned

Continued On Page 18



Tod Marks

Technical Analysis motors home with a victory in Saturday's Lake Placid.

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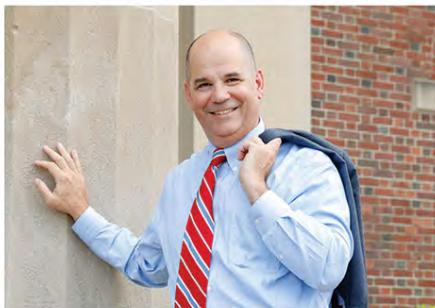


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Lake Placid —

Continued from page 16

\$2,288,892 for Jerry and Ron Franckel, Steve Laymon and Bradley Thoroughbreds.

But give the daughter of Kingman a little time.

She finished third in her debut at Belmont in November, and won the next time before bypassing Florida starts and returning in April. The \$258,109 Tattersalls yearling purchase won a first-level allowance going 1 1/16 miles, then tackled the 1 1/8-mile Wonder Again Stakes in June and was sixth behind Con Lima. Rather than try to extend the distance to either of the summer Oaks options for 3-year-old fillies in New York (Belmont, Saratoga), Brown went to the Lakes (George and Placid) and Technical Analysis dove right in — winning the Grade 3 Lake George at a mile July 23 and handling another sixteenth in Saturday's Grade 3 Lake Placid.

Owned by Klaravich Stable, Technical Analysis jumped out of the gate from post two and outran everybody for the lead as Jose Ortiz took one early look to his right for a challenge. Spanish Loveaffair arrived from the outside going into the first turn, but Technical Analysis cut the corner and kicked away through a first quarter-mile in :24.68.

Spanish Loveaffair got it back to a half-length after a half in :50.03, and applied a little pressure going into the final turn. Again, Technical Analysis responded — pulling away while drifting out a little and building momentum.

Four wide off the turn with Ortiz hanging on his left rein, she left loads of room to her left but took her cues from Ortiz, switched leads and drew away in the stretch. She won by 3 1/2 lengths over Runaway Rumour with Ego Trip third after 1:46.49 on yielding turf.

Brown and Ortiz talked strategy beforehand and felt like the front was the place to be, even if they stayed flexible.

"The more we work with this horse she just keeps getting faster and stronger and bigger," said the trainer. "I can see that she's very willing in her works and such and I just don't want to take anything away from her.

Too often lately we've been caught in these paceless races where sometimes we have the best horse and it just blows up on you. If my horses have some speed like this one, I'm going to send them out there."

Ortiz rode her the same way he did early in the Lake George, when Joustler and Navratilova were intent on making the lead so Technical Analysis backed out of a three-way pace battle and found a stalking spot before launching a bid.

"We knew there was no pace on paper so we left our options open," said the jockey. "Chad said, 'I'm not afraid to be on the lead.' He said to ride her like the last time. I hustled to the first turn, they went fast and I took back. Today, I made sure she ran to the first turn. If they gave it to me, they gave it to me. If somebody wanted to go, I could sit behind. It was a very moderate pace and we were able to be there."

Where she goes from here is up to her. Brown likes what he's seen at Saratoga and wouldn't be against longer trips.

"If you asked me at the beginning of the meet, after the Wonder Again, I was thinking along with Jose that we were just going to keep her at a mile," Brown said. "After the [Lake George], she took her race and has just been galloping out so well and willing in her works and I just see a horse that I'm open to again running longer and longer now that we're starting to see the best of her, especially the best of her mentally."

Technical Analysis showed off a bit of that mental progression with the wide trip coming off the turn though, as it turned out, it didn't matter much. Ortiz blamed some immaturity, borrowed Brown's "busy" terminology and was impressed.

"She's a little quirky and when she opened up, she felt a little bit alone and she started doing her stuff," said the jockey, aboard for five consecutive races. "I know her, but she caught me a little bit by surprise because I didn't know she was going to do it like that. I tapped her on the shoulder a couple of times and she reacted well. I was able to get her in the path I wanted to, she switched leads and did it very well. She wanted to play a little bit at the quarter pole."

Bred in Ireland by Rabbah Bloodstock, the bay filly won her fourth race and pushed her bankroll to \$298,200.

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Hoosier Pride

Martin-trained filly Piedi Bianchi pulls upset in turf sprint stakes

BY MARY EDDY

Trainer Carlos Martin had two options for 2020 Indiana Horse of the Year Piedi Bianchi's next start after a second in the off-the-turf Perfect Sting Stakes at Belmont Park. He could send the mare back to her home state to compete in a stakes at Indiana Grand, or he could try the Smart And Fancy Stakes at Saratoga, the track she has been training at throughout the summer.

Martin's decision to stay at Saratoga was rewarded Saturday when Piedi Bianchi took the lead at the eighth pole on the yielding Mellon turf course to win the \$120,000 stakes for fillies and mares.

Tyler Gaffalione straightened the daughter of Overanalyze after she broke outwardly at the start and set-

SMART AND FANCY RECAP

led into an outside stalking position, spotting pacesetter Robin Sparkles a half-length at the three-eighths pole. As Robin Sparkles dug into to try and maintain her lead at the top of the stretch, Piedi Bianchi had plenty left in the tank to take the lead and fend off runner-up Lead Guitar by 2 ¼ lengths. Stopping the clock in 1:04.95 for the 5 ½ furlongs, Piedi Bianchi secured the fourth stakes win for Jay Oringer, Jack Bick, Al Bianchi Racing, Adam Bayroff and Mike Maturo.

"Out of the gate, I took a nice hold and was getting over the ground well," Gaffalione said. "Coming into the stretch, when I asked her, she gave

Continued On Page 21

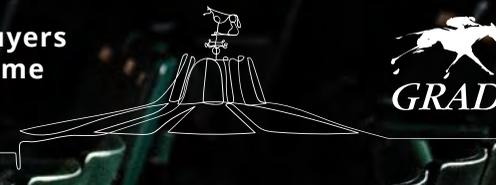


Tod Marks

Piedi Bianchi eyes the finish line en route to a stakes win Saturday.

ONE HORSE

Keeneland September buyers and sellers remember some names from the past.



HOOTENANNY, 2013. *Consignor Archie St. George*

"It was in the early stages of St. George Sales and he was in Book 1 but getting picked on for being lower in his back than some of the others on the consignment. Gatewood Bell came and looked and didn't really say a lot. He and Wesley Ward bought the horse for \$75,000, didn't vet him, just bought him on inspection. We sold him for some friends who had pinhooked him and they ended up taking a loss, but they stayed in for a piece. He broke his maiden at Keeneland, finished third in a stakes (at Pimlico) and they sold their piece to Coolmore before Ascot and he ended up winning the Windsor Castle, finishing second at Deauville (in the Group 1 Prix Morny) and winning the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf. It goes to show you. Of the horses we sold early in that sale, he was one of the least expensive, but he was a nice, strong horse. We sold him for what turned out to be a loss on the day, but they stayed in and it turned out great in the end. Gatewood was the smart one. He picked him out and bought him for one bid over the reserve."

Hootenanny won five of 16 starts, earned \$876,698. He stood one season at Buck Pond Farm in Kentucky and was later moved to Ward's farm in Kentucky as a private stallion.



SEPTEMBER
MON. 13 - SAT. 24

Smart And Fancy —

■ Continued from page 20

me everything she had. She really relished the course today. It was a nice tempo in front of us. It gave us a nice target.”

Coming into the Smart And Fancy winless in four starts on turf, trainer Carlos Martin questioned whether Piedi Bianchi truly wanted to run on the grass. But with a second in the Grade 3 Intercontinental over Belmont Park's Widener turf course in June, Oringer was confident his mare would be comfortable on any surface.

“She'll run on anything,” Oringer said. “(But) she's much faster on the turf so she gets in position. On the dirt, she's always getting in trouble; she doesn't want to get on the inside. On the turf, she gets wherever she wants to go. She's amazing. We've had her since she was a 2-year-old and she's been a pleasure to own. I give her groom Freddie Torres a ton of the credit.”

Piedi Bianchi tried the turf when with Todd Pletcher in 2019, finishing sixth in the South Beach Stakes at Gulfstream Park. Martin tried her on the turf in the Perfect Sting here in 2020, she finished sixth. She tried it for the third time with her sixth trainer, J.T. Servis, at Gulfstream in December, finishing fourth in the My Charmer.

Impressed with what he saw Saturday, Martin agrees the turf is a good spot for the mare.

“When she went to Florida last year, I asked ‘do you really want to run this mare on turf? She's so good on the

dirt,’ ” Martin said. “We got back together and she ran a big second in the Intercontinental. Today, she just loved the going. It made a big difference. The other horses are great horses. I'm not taking anything away from our victory, but it worked out perfectly for us today.”

The Smart And Fancy was the first time Gaffalione got a leg up on Piedi Bianchi since he rode her to a third in the Grade 2 Inside Information Stakes at Gulfstream Park in January. Martin watched Gaffalione win the Grade 1 Fourstardave and called his agent, Matt Muzikar.

“Tyler has been amazing this year,” Martin said. “When we saw him win on Got Stormy, I didn't really have a rider in mind so I called Matt and told him I was going to enter my mare. He said, ‘I'm in.’ ”

With the 6-year-old mare's career likely coming to a close at the end of the year, Martin is hoping to give her a big sendoff into retirement.

“She was Grade 1 placed at Del Mar so maybe we'll find something at Del Mar for her. I'd like for her career to end on a high, high note and I have some game owners,” Martin said. “I'm not sure if she would be good enough for the Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint. I think Caravel would have something to say about that, but it's a good position to be in.”

Piedi Bianchi's Smart And Fancy victory adds to a resume that includes a pair of wins in the Frances Slocum Stakes at Indiana Grand and the Correction Stakes at Aqueduct. She hit the board in three Grade 1 stakes during her 2-year-old season, finishing second in the Del Mar Debutante, third in the Chandelier Stakes at Santa Anita Park and third in the Starlet at Los Alamitos Race Course.

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Tick Tock

Horologist clocks off Sunday stakes for Mott, ownership group

BY MARY EDDY

“We’re going to need a lot more of those.”

That’s how one of the partners in Horologist reacted when presented the trophy for the mare’s victory in Sunday’s \$120,000 Summer Colony Stakes. Owned by Medallion Racing, There’s A Chance Stable, Parkland Thoroughbreds, Abbondanza Racing, Paradise Farms Corp. and David Staudacher, Horologist was welcomed back to the winner’s circle by a crowd of exuberant owners.

“It’s unbelievable,” said breeder and co-owner, Cameron Beatty. “I have the best partners that I brought in and they’re all really good people. I love them all.”

SUMMER COLONY STAKES RECAP

Horologist’s partners watched their mare from the clubhouse box seats as the leading edge of Tropical Storm Henri descended upon Saratoga Race Course. During a short break in the weather, the field of five fillies and mares broke from the starting gate and raced in clear weather. But with driving rain in the hour before the race, the main track was left good and sealed, a condition Horologist had never faced before.

“She had no previous form on an off-track, but she seemed to me like a horse who would handle it,” said trainer Bill Mott. “I wasn’t really concerned about that.”



Dave Harmon

Horologist splashes to victory in the Summer Colony Sunday.

Horologist wasn’t concerned about the track condition either, dominating her foes by 8 ½ lengths for the sixth stakes victory of her career. Sent to an easy lead by Junior Alvarado, the daughter of Gemologist had things her own way, unchallenged through three-quarters in 1:11.77. Rounding

the final turn, second choice Gold Spirit put in a mild bid to her outside, managing to stay on for second. Horologist crossed the wire geared down, completing the 1 1/8 miles in 1:51.57. So Darn Hot finished 12 ¼

Continued On Page 23

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Summer Colony —

■ Continued from page 22

lengths behind the winner in third.

“It was simple,” said Alvarado. “I rode her like the best horse and she showed it out there. Once she put herself on the lead, she took me all the way around. She’s very quick and is a good gate filly. If she wanted, she could go faster without using much.”

The trip in the Summer Colony was a great improvement from two of her last three races when she faced trouble at the start. Breaking outwardly in the Grade 3 Allaire DuPont Distaff Match Series Stakes at Pimlico May 14 the 5-year-old mare also had a poor start when she was squeezed in the beginning stages of the Lady Jacqueline Stakes at Thistledown two starts back. Mott said a clean trip helped Horologist find her best form in her runner-up effort in the Grade 3 Shuvee Stakes last time out and the Summer Colony.

“She had traffic trouble in two races. She was inside and stuck down in

there,” Mott said. “We let her bounce out of there and do her thing and not getting in her way. Getting a win is good for everyone.”

Beatty shared Mott’s sentiments, noting that getting a clean trip after frequent trouble this year was a relief.

“Sometimes the trips are so big,” he said as he made his way to the Carmen M. Barerra Horseman’s Lounge. “I never talk bad about a jockey because I love them all, but sometimes they have a split-second decision and if they don’t make it, then sometimes you have to look to the next race. That’s what we did. She had a great run in the Shuvee and just missed. It’s really cool to see her come back and run well today.”

The New Jersey-bred Horse of the Year in 2020, Horologist’s stakes wins are highlighted by Grade 3 wins in the Monmouth Oaks and Molly Pitcher Stakes at Monmouth Park and the Grade 2 Beldame at Belmont Park, where she defeated multiple Grade 1 winner Letruska. With career earnings of \$892,939, Horologist has won nine of 25 starts and finished on the board in seven others.



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2021 September Meet Stakes Schedule

SEPTEMBER 16 – OCTOBER 3

IROQUOIS (GIII)

2021 “Win and You’re In Juvenile Division” | 2022 Kentucky Derby Points Race

Runs Sat., Sept. 18
\$300,000 (includes \$75,000 KTDF)
Two Year Olds

Closes Sept. 4
(\$200 nomination fee)
1 1/16 Miles

POCAHONTAS (GIII)

2021 “Win and You’re In Juvenile Fillies Division” | 2022 Kentucky Oaks Points Race

Runs Sat., Sept. 18
\$300,000 (includes \$75,000 KTDF)
Fillies, Two Years Old

Closes Sept. 4
(\$200 nomination fee)
1 1/16 Miles

LOCUST GROVE (GIII)

Runs Sat., Sept. 18
\$400,000 (includes \$100,000 KTDF)
Fillies & Mares, Three Years Old & Up

Closes Sept. 4
(\$200 nomination fee)
1 1/16 Miles

OPEN MIND (Listed)

Runs Sat., Sept. 18
\$300,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF)
Fillies & Mares, Three Years Old & Up

Closes Sept. 4
(\$200 nomination fee)
6 Furlongs

LOUISVILLE THOROUGHBRED SOCIETY

Runs Sat., Sept. 18
\$275,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF)
Three Years Old & Up

Closes Sept. 4
(\$200 nomination fee)
6 Furlongs

DOGWOOD (Listed)

Runs Sat., Sept. 25
\$275,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF)
Fillies, Three Years Old

Closes Sept. 11
(\$200 nomination fee)
7 Furlongs

BOURBON TRAIL

Runs Sat., Sept. 25
\$275,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF)
Three Year Olds

Closes Sept. 11
(\$200 nomination fee)
1 3/16 Mile

HARRODS CREEK

Runs Sat., Sept. 25
\$275,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF)
Three Year Olds

Closes Sept. 11
(\$200 nomination fee)
7 Furlongs

SENECA OVERNIGHT STAKES

Runs Sat., Oct. 1
\$160,000 (includes \$61,500 KTDF)
Fillies, Three Years Old

Closes Sept. 24
(\$0 nomination fee)
1 1/16 Miles

ACK ACK (GIII)

Runs Sat., Oct. 2
\$300,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF)
Three Year Olds & Up

Closes Sept. 18
(\$200 nomination fee)
1 Mile

LUKAS CLASSIC (GIII)

Runs Sat., Oct. 2
\$400,000 (includes \$100,000 KTDF)
Three Year Olds & Up

Closes Sept. 18
(\$200 nomination fee)
1 1/8 Miles

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Well Earned

Metivier scores Alabama Day victory with Handle The Truth

Kerry Metivier picked the stall of one of his six trainees Sunday morning after giving his staff the day to relax a reward for working long hours in the heat last week.

"I have really great help. I just gave them the day off because they have been working hard," he said, setting down his rake to wipe the sweat from his brow. "All of my help comes from outside the area, so Sunday is family day for them."

The hard work from Metivier and his team paid off Saturday when Handle The Truth won the fourth race, a \$25,000 New York-bred maiden claiming race over the main track, on Alabama Day at Saratoga Race Course. After riding the 3-year-old filly to a fourth in a \$40,000 claimer July 21, jockey Benjamin Hernandez

WEEKEND RACING RECAP

was encouraged by the performance and suggested that Metivier give her another start at the meet.

"She's always been a real hard trier and ran a few good races in maiden special weights this winter at Aqueduct," said Metivier. "We knew she could run a little bit, but in the spring, she lost interest a little bit. So we regrouped and backed off her training. She ran really well during opening week and Benjamin said that he felt he had a ton of horse, just that she wasn't in the right spot. He did everything a jockey is supposed to do and it worked out for her. He rode a terrific race."

Hernandez opted for a come-from-behind trip, holding the daughter



Dave Harmon

Handle The Truth (8) edges Tellaperfecttale in Saturday's fourth race.

of Speightster about 4 lengths from pacesetter Tangerine Dream as she led the field of nine through a half in :46.15. Forced four-wide on the turn, Hernandez urged Handle The Truth to the finish, approaching a trio of foes at sixteenth pole. In the final strides before the wire, Handle The Truth made a late surge on the out-

side to nab Tellaperfecttale at the wire and earn her first victory by a nose.

Owner Patrick Scognamiglio of Monarch Farm was nervous about running the filly for a tag again, but Metivier was confident Saturday's race was the right spot.

"(Scognamiglio) is the best," Me-

Continued On Page 25

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LOTTERY

Recap —

Continued from page 24

tivier said of his Port Washington, N.Y.-based owner. “He told me that everything he wins he wants to reinvest because he loves horse racing. I was so glad he was able to travel here yesterday to see her win. He’s 100 percent behind his horses. He was worried all day that someone was going to claim her, but I told him ‘if we put her where she can win, she’ll do good things.’ He’s not in it to make a lot of money. He’s in it to watch his horses run.”

The filly was not claimed and returned to Metivier’s barn after her victory. A day later, she enjoyed a quiet morning and took a stroll around the barn with her trainer.

“She’s doing good. She got hot yesterday, but she calmed down,” he said. “The adrenaline and the heat kind of caught up to her. But she ate up this morning and is doing good.”

Metivier will now consider his options for Handle The Truth’s next race.

“I’m not sure what’s next, but she’ll run this fall at Belmont,” he said. “We already tried her on the turf and she didn’t really like that. She likes wet and wet-fast, so maybe she’ll be an MTO in the next level.”

“We’ve got a couple more horses to run at Saratoga and then we’ll move back over to the Oklahoma and prepare for the fall. We do a lot of driving back and forth to Belmont.”

— Mary Eddy

• The Important One recorded her third victory in Saturday’s sixth, an off-the-turf state-bred optional claimer for fillies and mares. The chestnut daughter of Majestic City’s latest win is her first since an allowance at Belmont Park last June. On the board in a division of the New York Stallion Series at Saratoga last year, she led every step of the 5 1/2 furlongs and widened on her five rivals turning for home. She finished 5 3/4 ahead of Betsy Blue. Trained by Steve Asmussen, The Important One finished in 1:03.40 over the fast main track.

The sixth race was named the Taunia Derby in celebration of the birthday of longtime race fan Taunia Kipp. The native of Saratoga Springs has been attending the races all her life. She shared her love of racing with her husband, Jim Lippie.

“I’m originally from Boston and Taunia introduced me to racing three years ago,” said Lippie. “I remember the first time she brought me I was looking at the program and saw the sponsored races. So I kept it in the back of my head. I wanted to do something different for her birthday and so we did this.”

After seeing winner’s circle celebrations for many years from the outside, Kipp was honored to present a framed program to The Important One’s connections.

“It’s fantastic,” she said. “This is the best gift ever. My family and friends are here, too. It’s great to be part of the scene here.”

— Mary Eddy

Continued On Page 26



Tod Marks

The Important One wins Saturday’s sixth race.



CHURCHILL DOWNS

2021 Fall Meet Stakes Schedule

OCTOBER 31 – NOVEMBER 28

STARS OF TOMORROW I

STREET SENSE

Runs Sun., Oct. 31 \$200,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF) Two Year Olds	Closes Oct. 16 (\$150 nomination fee) 1 1/16 Miles
---	--

RAGS TO RICHES

Runs Sun., Oct. 31 \$200,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF) Fillies, Two Years Old	Closes Oct. 16 (\$150 nomination fee) 1 1/16 Miles
--	--

BET ON SUNSHINE

Runs Sat., Nov. 6 \$300,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF) Three Years Old & Up	Closes Oct. 23 (\$200 nomination fee) 6 Furlongs
---	--

DREAM SUPREME

Runs Sat., Nov. 13 \$300,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF) Fillies & Mares, Three Years Old & Up	Closes Oct. 30 (\$200 nomination fee) 6 Furlongs
---	--

CHILUKKI (GIII)

Runs Sat., Nov. 20 \$300,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF) Fillies & Mares, Three Years Old & Up	Closes Nov. 6 (\$200 nomination fee) 1 Mile
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FALLS CITY (GII)

Runs Thurs., Nov. 25 \$500,000 (includes \$100,000 KTDF) Fillies & Mares, Three Years Old & Up	Closes Nov. 13 (\$300 nomination fee) 1 1/8 Mile
--	--

CLARK (GI)

presented by Norton Healthcare

Runs Fri., Nov. 26 \$750,000 (includes \$100,000 KTDF) Three Year Olds & Up	Closes Nov. 13 (\$300 nomination fee) 1 1/8 Miles
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STARS OF TOMORROW II

LIVELY SHIVELY

Runs Sat., Nov. 27 \$200,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF) Two Year Olds	Closes Nov. 13 (\$150 nomination fee) 6 1/2 Furlongs
---	--

FERN CREEK

Runs Sat., Nov. 27 \$200,000 (includes \$50,000 KTDF) Fillies, Two Years Old & Up	Closes Nov. 13 (\$150 nomination fee) 6 1/2 Furlongs
---	--

GOLDEN ROD (GII)

2022 Kentucky Oaks Points Race

Runs Sat., Nov. 27 \$400,000 (includes \$75,000 KTDF) Fillies, Two Years Old	Closes Nov. 13 (\$200 nomination fee) 1 1/16 Miles
--	--

KENTUCKY JOCKEY CLUB (GII)

2022 Kentucky Derby Points Race

Runs Sat., Nov. 27 \$400,000 (includes \$75,000 KTDF) Two Year Olds	Closes Nov. 13 (\$200 nomination fee) 1 1/16 Miles
---	--

Recap —

■ Continued from page 25

• Saturday's seventh, dubbed the "Too Late to Run – Finally Married," went to the 2-year-old Into Mischief colt My Prankster. Robert and Lawana Low's colt won the 6 1/2-furlong maiden by 10 lengths. After racing third through the opening half, Luis Saez took My Prankster to the lead at the quarter pole, tapped him once entering the stretch and it was all over but the posting of the "official" sign.

The "finally married" couple joined the winner's after the race. Beth Ann Agostini and John Murphy believe in long engagements, 12 years in their case, but when the nuptials were finally held at Christ Episcopal Church in Ballston Spa, the wedding party moved to the Rachel Alexandra Suite in the 1863 Club for the reception and a day of races on Alabama Day. Agostini had always been a racing fan and when she met John 15 years ago, she made him a convert.

"I had kind of a bucket list of big races I wanted to see and we're working our way through them," she said.

As a lawyer, now in Vermont, but earlier living and practicing in New York, she went to Belmont Park every time there was a possible Triple Crown. "Finally, we saw American Pharoah win the Belmont, and three years later Justify," she said, verbally crossing off two items on that bucket list. "Because we've enjoyed it so much, the track seemed a great place to celebrate our wedding."

The only person in the winner's circle who might have had even more reasons to celebrate was My Prankster's trainer, Todd Pletcher. Not only was he coming off a Covid quarantine, his win gave him a double for the day in 2-year-old maiden special weight races. He also won with the Constitution colt Major General.

Pletcher came into the meet hopeful his 2-year-olds would fare well.

"But you never know for sure until you start running them against everybody else's," he said. "These are first-time starters so it's kind of jumping into the deep end of the pool with them. Thankfully they're firing."

Pletcher later made it three on the day when Malathaat won the featured Grade 1 Alabama.

— Terry Hill



Dave Harmon

Two-year-old filly Fortineno wins Sunday's second race.

• Fans of 2011 Horse of the Year Havre de Grace were treated to an 8 3/4-length victory by her daughter, Perfect Grace, in Saturday's nightcap. A homebred for Mandy Pope's Whisper Hill Farm, which purchased

Havre de Grace for \$10 million at the 2012 Fasig-Tipton Kentucky November mixed sale, Perfect Grace put it all together in her fourth start.

Continued On Page 27

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Recap —

■ Continued from page 26

After a trio of seconds for trainer Ralph Nicks, the 3-year-old Tapit filly found her way to the winner's circle from just off the pace under Tyler Gaffalione.

"She just keeps getting better every race and she's mentally growing up," Gaffalione said after his second win on the card. "Physically she's put on more weight. She's much more professional and broke well. I was able to get her to settle and then she turned it on."

The ease of her win at 7 furlongs, combined with her celebrity pedigree, might see Perfect Grace stretch out down the road.

"(Going longer) has always kind of been the plan, but just in a steady progression," Gaffalione said. "Ralph does a great job training and he knows what he's doing."

The win capped off a memorable day for Gaffalione, who won the Smart N Fancy Stakes aboard Piedi Bianchi earlier on the card and finished on the board with each of his other six mounts.

Perfect Grace is a full-sister to Grade 3 Molly Pitcher Stakes winner Graceful Princess. She is the fifth of six foals from her dam, with all four to race being winners.

Havre de Grace is best remembered as the second female winner of the Grade 1 Woodward Stakes, defeating multiple Grade 1 winner Flat Out by 1 1/4 lengths.

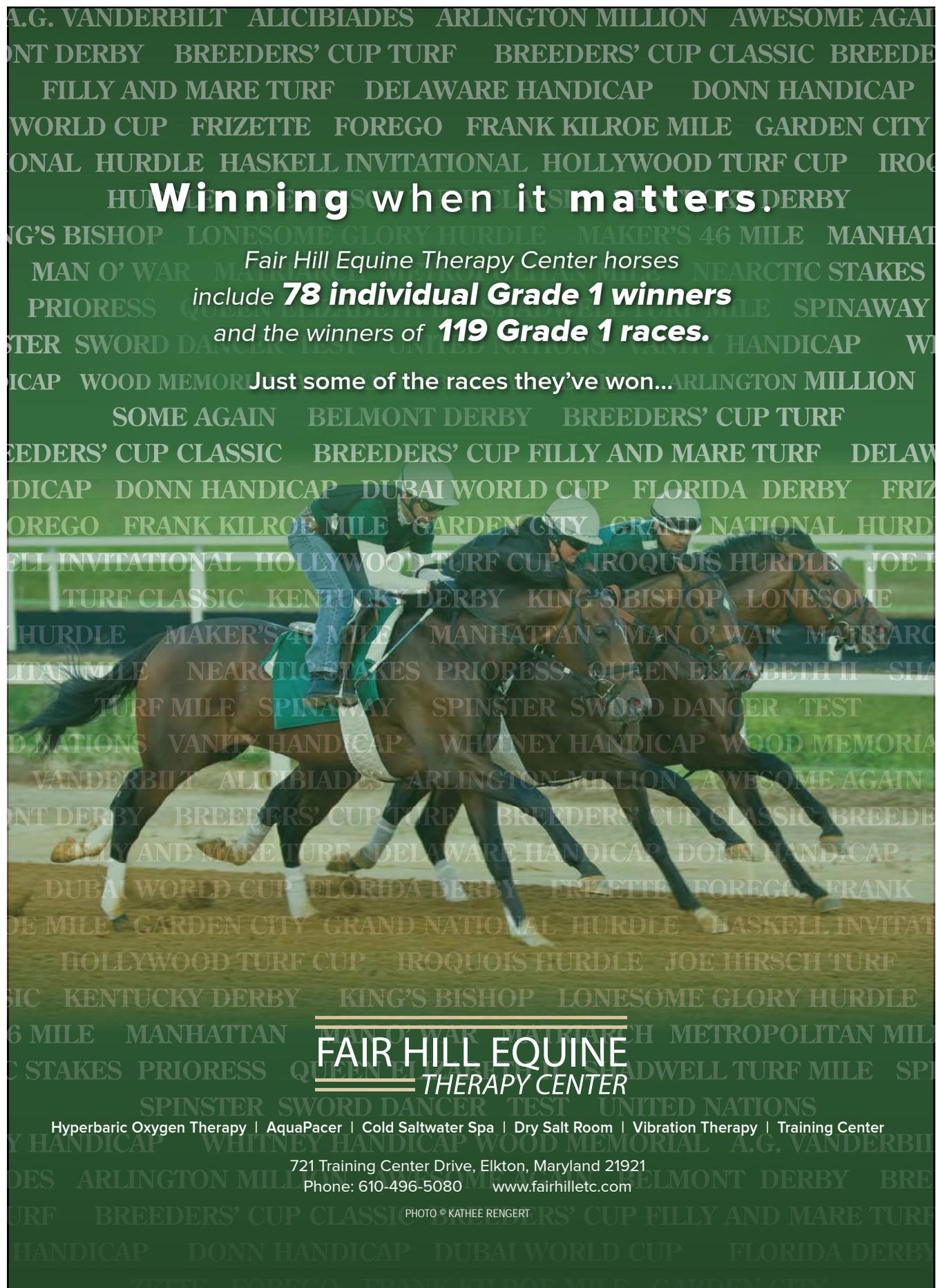
— Mary Eddy

- Christophe Clement trainee Fortineno won at first asking in Sunday's second, a \$100,000 maiden for 2-year-old fillies.

Owned by West Point Thoroughbreds, Edwin Barker, William Freeman and Michael Valdes, the Irish-bred daughter of Frankel won with a stalking trip, racing near the middle of the field of seven. Fortineno took command at the eighth pole under Jose Ortiz and crossed the wire 1 1/2 lengths ahead of runner-up Seduce.

"I'm not sure she loved the going, but he said she was trying the whole time," said Terry Finley, president of West Point Thoroughbreds. "She's got a long, beautiful stride and a pedigree

Continued On Page 28



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PHOTO © KATHEE RENGERT

Recap —

■ Continued from page 27

to die for. It's a long time between the time you buy them and the time you get here. I appreciate the patience from our partners."

Out of the stakes-placed Invincible Spirit mare Rubina, Fortineno was a \$400,000 purchase at the Keeneland September yearling sale last year for her owners. Finley said the filly's Irish heritage and special date of birth had some influence in the decision to buy.

"She's an Irish-bred and she was born on St. Patrick's Day, so I just thought it was a lot of good omens," he said with a smile. "With her pedigree, she was going to bring a lot of money. The good thing is she was early in the sale and I thought that would give us an advantage."

Finley will now cross his fingers for a big second half to the filly's juvenile season.

"We'll see what's next, but I think she's got a shot to take a step forward," he said. "There's only so many fillies who win on the grass going long here. I'd have to think we look at a race to get her ready to go to the Breeders' Cup."

Clement brought his win total to 10 wins at the meet, led by Sport Model's victory in the Statue of Liberty division of the New York Stallion Series Stakes Aug. 4.

— Mary Eddy

• After Bella Sofia impressed winning the Grade 1 Test Stakes on Aug. 7, majority owner Michael Imperio noted that his ownership group had turned down an \$800,000 offer for the filly two weeks before the race.

"I wanted to take it, or at least sell half, but my partners outvoted me," he said.

Seems like there was a recount. Word came out Tuesday that Medallion Racing, Parkland Thoroughbreds and Barry Fowler have purchased a minority interest in Bella Sofia in a deal brokered by bloodstock agent Nick Sallusto.

Bella Sofia, by Awesome Patriot, stamped herself as one of the top female sprinters in the country when she stormed away from a talented field to win the Test by 4 1/2 lengths, earning a 101 Beyer Speed Figure. Trained by Rudy Rodriguez, Bella Sofia has won three times in four starts with earnings of \$405,100.

Medallion, Parkland, and Fowler join original owners Imperio, Vincent Scuderi, Sofia Soares, Gabrielle Farm, Mazel Stable Partners and Matthew Mercurio in campaigning the filly.

"Nick Sallusto and I talked after the filly broke her maiden. I felt she was one to keep an eye on," said Medallion Racing's Mark Taylor. "And her Test was a jaw-dropper. She showed freakish talent, and she's got a sneaky good pedigree. We are grateful for the opportunity to be in on her."

Sallusto and Hanzly Albina bought Bella Sofia for the original ownership group for \$20,000 at last year's OBS June sale of 2-year-olds in training.



Tod Marks

Test winner Bella Sofia adds some owners.

The filly was sent to Sallusto's Thorostock Training Center in Morristown, Fla., prior to joining Rodriguez' barn at Belmont.

The Grade 2 Gallant Bloom Handicap at Belmont Sept. 26 is under consideration for Bella Sofia, with an eye toward the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Sprint Nov. 6 at Del Mar.

— Paul Halloran



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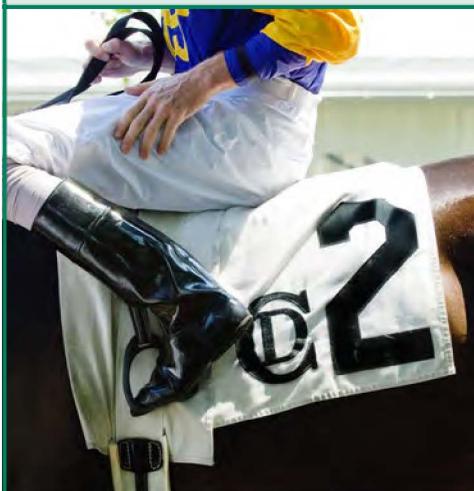
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Llamame

Argentine-bred aims at Wednesday feature

BY MARY EDDY

Fantasio walked the shedrow of Horacio DePaz's Clare Court barn Tuesday morning, cooling out after galloping around the main track in preparation for today's \$120,000 John's Call Stakes. Making his way to the wash pad, the 6-year-old horse looked around alertly at the sixth racetrack he's seen in his three racing seasons. Bred in Argentina, he ran his first 23 races there before coming to America for Jeff Bloom's Bloom Racing Stable and trainer Ignacio Correas, who co-owns the horse as well.

"Jeff was looking for a South American horse and this one came up," Correas said after watching his horse gallop. "I called him and said, 'this horse seems like he'll go for the right money.' So he said 'ok, go ahead and do it.' A bloodstock agent in Argentina recommended him to me and Jeff. He's a very nice horse. He doesn't care about anything. He's relaxed and not a problem."

A two-time Group 3 winner in Argentina, the son of Strategic Prince finished fourth in his American debut, the Grade 2 Elkhorn Stakes at Keeneland. Two starts later, he finished second to Irish raider Baron Samedi in the Grade 2 Belmont Gold Cup at Belmont Park going 2 miles. Correas believes the John's Call distance of 1 5/8 should suit his horse well.

"The longer the better for him, and maybe worse for the others," he laughed. "I think he's a good horse at a mile and a half, but the longer you go, not every horse has that kind of stamina. It favors



Tod Marks

It's getting late early. Week Seven – Travers Week – kicks off with the John's Call Stakes today.

him. We don't have too many 2-mile races, so a mile and five-eighths seems good enough."

Fantasio's last start was a disappointing eighth in the Grade 1 United Nations Stakes at Monmouth Park July 17. Though he does not feel the blinkers cost him a favorable trip in that race, Correas decided to remove the blinkers for the John's Call to try and bring the horse back to his best form.

"A lot of things didn't go his way that day," Correas said. "He did well without the blinkers and I was trying to see if I could focus him a little more. I cannot blame the blinkers for that experience, but I thought it would be good to go back to what worked."

Javier Castellano, who rode the horse to his runner-up finish in the Belmont Gold Cup, takes the mount again.

"He rode him well and now he knows the horse. I'm pleased with that, and that's the biggest reason we had him ride again," said Correas.

Fantasio will face six rivals, including morning-line 5-2 favorite Shamrocket, who comes into the John's Call off a third in the Grade 2 Bowling Green Stakes July 31. Joel Rosario gets the call for the first time since finishing third with the 4-year-old son of Tonalist in the Gun Runner Dueling Grounds Derby at Kentucky Downs last September. Shamrocket is looking for his first stakes victory after placing in five other stakes in his 17-race career.

Serve The King, fourth in the United Nations, looks to give trainer Chad Brown his fourth win in

Continued On Page 31



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Preview —

■ Continued from page 30

this race. A debut winner at Tampa Bay Downs in 2019, the son of Kingman has since won two allowances and placed in the Grade 3 Monmouth Stakes and the Henry S. Clark Stakes. Serve the King enters as 3-1 second choice with Irad Ortiz Jr. up.

Leading trainer Mike Maker sends out Ajourneytofreedom and Conviction Trade, who faced each other in the Grade 3 John B. Connally Turf Cup Stakes earlier this year at Sam Houston. Ajourneytofreedom finished a close second while Conviction Trade settled for third a length behind his stablemate. Winner of an optional claimer last time out July 23 at Saratoga, Ajourneytofreedom has the shorter odds of the two Maker runners at 7-2. Conviction Trade searches for his first win since winning a \$50,000 claimer, when claimed by Maker, at Belmont in October.

Rounding out the field for the John's Call are Grade 3 Sycamore Stakes winner Red Knight for trainer Bill Mott and stakes winner Ry's The Guy for Ian Wilkes.

Allard eyes Riskaverse

In Thursday's \$120,000 Riskaverse Stakes, trainer Ned Allard sends out Triple Digit with Jose Lezcano for owner Charles Matses. Since making the switch to turf in June, Triple Digit has won two of three. Starting her career on dirt last fall after turf season had ended, Allard said he'd been planning the change in surface for some time.

"She's one of those fillies that looked like she was going to be a pretty nice filly early, but then she got to be a little ordinary on the dirt. Her first start on the grass was an awesome effort," Allard said of her 6 ½ length allowance win at Parx Racing June 7. "It looks like she has improved dramatically. I hope we're on the grass Thursday. I've gone up here twice this summer and they weren't on the grass either time."

After impressing in her turf debut, the daughter of Twirling Candy took a step up in class in the Christiana Stakes at Delaware Park July 3. Forced wide the entire trip, Triple Digit tired and finished sixth. With



Tod Marks

Shamrocket is favored in the John's Call.

another allowance win in her next outing, Allard's options were to send the 3-year-old filly to either the Grade 2 Lake Placid Stakes last Saturday or the Riskaverse Thursday.

"This is a restricted stakes, so I thought on paper I wouldn't go to the Lake Placid since it's open to tougher competition," Allard said. "It's a little easier competition here and I think she's got a shot. Plus, where do you run a 3-year-old against 3-year-olds? You can't even get a 3-year-old allowance race to fill. So this was a good spot."

Allard is the longtime trainer for Matses and also campaigned the filly's dam, Boxford Belle.

"I've known and trained for Charlie for about 40 years," Allard said. "He and all my other New England associates have been with me for a long time. They've been great owners."

Triple Digit will face 10 other sophomore fillies, including three from trainer Chad Brown. The three-time Saratoga title holder unleashes Minaun, second in the Wild Applause Stakes at Belmont Park June 21, Amy C, sixth in the Grade 3 Lake George Stakes last time and recent maiden winner Rastafara.

Two-time winner Third Draft, stakes-placed fillies Designer Ready and Hit The Woah, lightly-raced Love And Money, Penn National shipper Stand By You and Irish-breds Magisterium and Keeper Of Time complete the field. The latter makes her state-side debut for Brendan Walsh after winning the Group 3 1000 Guineas Trial at Leopardstown in April.

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SARATOGA ENTRIES

Wednesday, August 25.

1ST (1:05PM). \$40,000, MCL \$20,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 6F

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 5, Daily Double

1	.....	Uncle Skeets	.....	J. Ortiz	.....	K. Breen	.....	3-1
2	.....	Point of Humor	.....	L. Saez	.....	K. Breen	.....	6-1
3	.....	Rudy Rod	.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.	.....	R. Rodriguez	.....	7-5
4	.....	Run White Rabbit	.....	R. Santana, Jr.	.....	J. Vazquez	.....	12-1
5	.....	No Burn	.....	J. Alvarado	.....	W. Mott	.....	5-2
6	.....	Value Chain	.....	O. Hernandez Moreno	.....	L. Gyarmati	.....	30-1
7	.....	Call Home	.....	D. Cohen	.....	W. Potts	.....	20-1
8	.....	Napoleon Complex	.....	B. Hernandez	.....	R. Metivier	.....	30-1

2ND (1:41PM). \$45,000, CLM \$25,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 6F

Exacta, Quinella, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 4, Daily Double

1	.....	Extreme Force	.....	T. Gaffalione	.....	M. Maker	.....	4-1
2	.....	Casals	.....	L. Saez	.....	P. Walder	.....	6-1
3	.....	Quick Return	.....	D. Davis	.....	J. Ferraro	.....	2-1
4	.....	Forest Spirit	.....	J. Rosario	.....	C. Martin	.....	9-5
5	.....	U. S. Steel	.....	J. Ortiz	.....	W. Potts	.....	10-1
6	.....	Tallaj	.....	J. Lezcano	.....	L. Rice	.....	6-1

3RD (2:15PM). \$110,000, AOC \$100,000, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M, 1 1/8M (INNER TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double

1	.....	Pocket Square (GB)	.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.	.....	C. Brown	.....	2-5
2	.....	Bramble Bay	.....	J. Lezcano	.....	M. Dini	.....	12-1
3	.....	MTO Singita Dreams	.....	T. Gaffalione	.....	P. Bauer	.....	2-5
4	.....	Key Biscayne	.....	T. Gaffalione	.....	M. Maker	.....	6-1
5	.....	Hungry Kitten	.....	J. Ortiz	.....	C. McGaughey III	.....	3-1
6	.....	Hogans Holiday	.....	L. Saez	.....	R. Falcone, Jr.	.....	10-1

4TH (2:49PM). \$55,000, CLM \$25,000, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M, 6 1/2F

Exacta, Quinella, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double

1	.....	Flat Awesome Jenny	.....	D. Davis	.....	I. Wilkes	.....	6-1
2	.....	Lady by Choice	.....	J. Samuel	.....	O. Barrera, III	.....	20-1
3	.....	Invaluable	.....	J. Ortiz	.....	P. Reynolds	.....	5-2
4	.....	Luann	.....	T. Gaffalione	.....	K. Breen	.....	8-1
5	.....	Timely Tradition	.....	M. Franco	.....	R. Handal	.....	6-1
6	.....	Saratoga Beauty	.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.	.....	R. Atras	.....	5-1
7	.....	Shasta Star	.....	D. Cohen	.....	R. Diodoro	.....	5-1
8	.....	Awesome Indra	.....	L. Saez	.....	E. Barker	.....	7-2

5TH (3:21PM). \$100,000, MSW, 3 YO'S & UP, 5 1/2F (TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 6, Daily Double

1	.....	Digital Future	.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.	.....	C. Brown	.....	6-5
2	.....	On the Dean's List	.....	L. Rodriguez Castro	.....	M. Winney	.....	30-1
3	.....	Partner's Hope	.....	L. Saez	.....	L. Rice	.....	8-1
4	.....	Beckenbauer	.....	J. Samuel	.....	L. Miranda	.....	30-1
5	.....	Kawhi Me a River	.....	J. Lezcano	.....	J. Terranova II	.....	4-1
6	.....	Canyouhearmenow	.....	H. Harkie	.....	D. Seyler	.....	50-1
7	.....	MTO Sir William	.....	B. Hernandez	.....	J. Ferraro	.....	12-1
8	.....	Cool Quest	.....	J. Velazquez	.....	B. Lynch	.....	9-2
9	.....	First Law	.....	J. Ortiz	.....	J. O'Dwyer	.....	3-1

6TH (3:55PM). \$85,000, MSW, 2 YO, F, 1 1/16M (INNER TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 5, Daily Double

1	.....	Solib	.....	J. Lezcano	.....	R. Rodriguez	.....	20-1
2	.....	Sweet Sugar Baby	.....	J. Ortiz	.....	J. Englehart	.....	10-1
3	.....	Whatlovelookslike	.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.	.....	T. Pletcher	.....	4-1
4	.....	False Hope	.....	L. Saez	.....	D. Schettino	.....	6-1
5	.....	Cupere	.....	M. Franco	.....	B. Tagg	.....	8-1
6	.....	Oak Loves a Fight	.....	D. Davis	.....	O. Noda	.....	9-2
7	.....	Preposterous	.....	J. Rosario	.....	S. Joseph, Jr.	.....	10-1
8	.....	Waterville	.....	T. Gaffalione	.....	C. Clement	.....	3-1
9	.....	Princessinparadise	.....	R. Santana, Jr.	.....	M. Maker	.....	8-1
10	.....	Saratoga Chrome	.....	E. Cancel	.....	A. Dutrow	.....	20-1
11	.....	Rcaptivating	.....	J. Samuel	.....	R. Keithan	.....	30-1
12	.....	Rigby	.....	L. Saez	.....	M. Maker	.....	9-2
13	.....	Arisaema	.....	J. Ortiz	.....	J. Abreu	.....	8-1

7TH (4:29PM). \$55,000, CLM \$25,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 6F

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 4, Daily Double

1	.....	Vicar's Legend	.....	T. Howell	.....	W. Younghans	.....	30-1
1a	.....	Manifest Destiny	.....	T. Chang	.....	W. Younghans	.....	30-1
2	.....	Gandy Dancing	.....	J. Castellano	.....	C. Brown	.....	9-2
3	.....	Big Mountain	.....	T. Gaffalione	.....	M. Miceli	.....	8-1
4	.....	Power Up Paynter	.....	J. Lezcano	.....	L. Rice	.....	5-1
5	.....	Binkster	.....	D. Davis	.....	R. Handal	.....	5-2
6	.....	Ninth Hour	.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.	.....	O. Noda	.....	6-1
7	.....	Just Right	.....	J. Ortiz	.....	B. Levine	.....	4-1
8	.....	Dark Money	.....	L. Saez	.....	E. Jones	.....	5-1

8TH (5:05PM). \$60,000, STR \$50,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 1 1/8M

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double

1	.....	Beachwalker	.....	M. Franco	.....	R. Moquett	.....	15-1
2	.....	Tiz Rye Time	.....	J. Castellano	.....	I. Wilkes	.....	8-1
3	.....	Handy	.....	J. Ortiz	.....	W. Potts	.....	10-1
4	.....	Hombrazo	.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.	.....	J. Sharp	.....	7-2
5	.....	Winter Pool	.....	R. Santana, Jr.	.....	C. Brown	.....	2-1
6	.....	Auburn Hills	.....	L. Saez	.....	M. Maker	.....	8-1
7	.....	Top Gun Tommy	.....	T. Gaffalione	.....	K. Breen	.....	4-1
8	.....	Giocare	.....	J. Rosario	.....	T. Pletcher	.....	6-1

9TH (5:39PM). \$120,000, STK - THE JOHN'S CALL, 4 YO'S & UP, 1 5/8M (TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Daily Double

1	.....	Red Knight	.....	J. Alvarado	.....	W. Mott	.....	5-1
2	.....	MTO Moretti	.....	Rider TBA	.....	T. Pletcher	.....	3-5
3	.....	Shamrocket	.....	J. Rosario	.....	T. Pletcher	.....	5-2
4	.....	Ajourneytofreedom	.....	T. Gaffalione	.....	M. Maker	.....	7-2
5	.....	Conviction Trade	.....	J. Ortiz	.....	M. Maker	.....	12-1
6	.....	Fantastico (ARG)	.....	J. Castellano	.....	I. Correias, IV	.....	6-1
7	.....	Ry's the Guy	.....	L. Saez	.....	I. Wilkes	.....	6-1
8	.....	Serve the King (GB)	.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.	.....	C. Brown	.....	3-1

10TH (6:13PM). \$50,000, CLM \$35,000, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M, 1 1/16M (INNER TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta

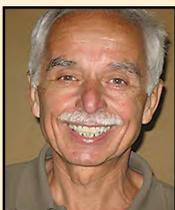
1	.....	Unicorn Sally	.....	L. Saez	.....	J. Kimmel	.....	12-1
2	.....	Kitten's Romance	.....	D. Davis	.....	M. Hennig	.....	6-1
3	.....	Two Cent Tootsie	.....	M. Franco	.....	T. Albertrani	.....	10-1
4	.....	Seeking Revenge	.....	J. Torres	.....	J. Stephens	.....	20-1
5	.....	Jazzy Lady	.....	J. Ortiz	.....	M. Maker	.....	9-2
6	.....	Wicked Amber	.....	B. Hernandez	.....	R. Persaud	.....	15-1
7	.....	Giggle Factory	.....	J. Alvarado	.....	T. Albertrani	.....	12-1
8	.....	Mia Bea Star	.....	E. Cancel	.....	O. Noda	.....	20-1
9	.....	Joquar	.....	J. Castellano	.....	L. Rice	.....	8-1
10	.....	Come Storming	.....	J. Rosario	.....	S. Klesaris	.....	6-1
11	.....	My Candy Girl	.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.	.....	M. Maker	.....	7-2
12	.....	Alba's Star	.....	J. Lezcano	.....	M. Kantarmaci	.....	12-1
13	AE Sky Kitten	L. Rodriguez Castro	R. Persaud	30-1
14	AE-MTO Courageous Girl	J. Ortiz	H. DePaz	5-2

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Law**



**Charles
Bedard**



**Rob
Whitlock**



**Jessica
Paquette**

Race #

1

No Burn
Uncle Skeets
Point Of Humor

No Burn
Uncle Skeets
Point Of Humor

Rudy Rod
Uncle Skeets
No Burn

No Burn
Point Of Humor
Rudy Rod

No Burn
Point Of Humor
Rudy Rod

2

Quick Return
Extreme Force
Tallaj

Forest Spirit
Quick Return
Casalsa

Forest Spirit
Casalsa
Extreme Force

Quick Return
Casalsa
Extreme Force

Forest Spirit
Quick Return
Extreme Force

3

Singita Dreams
Pocket Square
Hungry Kitten

Singita Dreams
Pocket Square
Hungry Kitten

Singita Dreams
Bramble Bay
Key Biscayne

Singita Dreams
Key Biscayne
Hungry Kitten

Singita Dreams
Pocket Square
Bramble Bay

4

Invaluable
Timely Tradition
Flat Awesome Jenny

Awesome Indra
Invaluable
Saratoga Beauty

Invaluable
Luann
Shasta Star

Invaluable
Awesome Indra
Saratoga Beauty

Invaluable
Shasta Star
Awesome Indra

5

Cool Quest
Kawhi Me A River
Digital Future

Digital Future
Kawhi Me A River
Cool Quest

Digital Future
Kawhi Me A River
First Law

Kawhi Me A River
Digital Future
First Law

Sir William
Cool Quest
Digital Future

6

Rigby
Cupere
Waterville

Waterville
Whatlovelookslike
Cupere

Waterville
Sweet Sugar Baby
Princessinparadise

Waterville
Whatlovelookslike
Preposterous

Arisaema
Waterville
False Hope

7

Gandy Dancing
Binkster
Dark Money

Binkster
Ninth Hour
Just Right

Binkster
Just Right
Power Up Paynter

Handy Dancing
Binkster
Ninth Hour

Ninth Hour
Gandy Dancing
Power Up Paynter

8

Winter Pool
Hombrazo
Top Gun Tommy

Winter Pool
Giocare
Top Gun Tommy

Winter Pool
Giocare
Tiz Rye Time

Winter Pool
Giocare
Auburn Hills

Winter Pool
Top Gun Tommy
Tiz Rye Time

9

Moretti
Red Knight
Shamrocket

Moretti
Shamrocket
Red Knight

Moretti
Conviction Trade
Red Knight

Shamrocket
Fantasioso
Serve The King

Moretti
Shamrocket
Red Knight

10

My Candy Girl
Kitten's Romance
Jazzy Lady

My Candy Girl
Jazzy Lady
Kitten's Romance

My Candy Girl
Joqular
Seeking Revenge

Kitten's Romance
Jazzy Lady
Come Storming

My Candy Girl
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Showcase —

Continued from page 34

icville, will try for a couple of the day's major rewards when they run Rinaldi in the \$150,000 West Point Stakes and Giacosa in the \$150,000 Yaddo. Giacosa is a homebred, a daughter of the Bond-trained Tizway out of the Smart Strike mare Smart Engagement that Jim Bond bought as a yearling for \$30,000 and won two races with on the NYRA circuit in 2008 and 2009.

The Bonds spent Tuesday morning training the family's string out of their private barn on Gridley and another on the main track not far from the Morning Line Kitchen. When they finished there they, like other small-, medium- and large-scale breeders in the state, went to the farm to continue the process of producing the next generation of potential runners to compete at Saratoga.

"Tuesday is a dark day for a lot of people but after this we're going to the farm to wean some babies off their mares," Jim Bond said. "We all want to get here. When you're lucky enough to win at Saratoga with one of them it's like 'wow, it came together, finally.' You have to wait, sometimes, three years, or more for that plan. You talk about a stock market going up and down. It's a roller coaster someday, one comes in with a temperature, something wrong or whatever it might be. It's humbling."

Lawrence Goichman knows the rewards and what it takes to make it in New York.

He bred last year's Yaddo winner Myhartblongstodady from a relatively small broodmare band and he finished second in last weekend's Grade 2 Lake Placid Stakes with the 3-year-old New York-bred filly Runaway Rumour.

Goichman is represented by three runners on the Showcase Day card — Myhartblongstodady in her Yaddo defense, Run Curtis Run in the \$200,000 Funny Cide for 2-year-olds and Graded On A Curve in the West Point. He owns Myhartblongstodady, but sold Run Curtis Run (\$45,000 at 2020 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic Eastern fall yearling sale) and Graded On A Curve (\$80,000 at 2017 Fasig-Tipton Saratoga New York-bred yearling sale).

"It's nice to see horses that I bred run," Goichman said. "As a breeder, it gives me the chance to visit with the kids who graduated from our program. I can unequivocally say that I'm nervous. I want them all to do well."

"It's a great program, that's why I pursue it. It enables you to come up with the income you need to support your program. Unless you're a member of the ruling class in the Middle East and you have oil wells, you have to make it work financially. I wanted to develop a breeding program and that's what I did. The goal was to produce some high-quality runners. It's a

Continued On Page 36



Tod Marks

Myhartblongstodady defends her Yaddo title.

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Showcase —

■ Continued from page 35

lot of fun when it works. Friday is going to be a lot of fun for me, to see three horses I bred all in stakes.”

Make Mischief, bred by the Martinez family's Avanti Stable in nearby Greenfield Center, makes her second start at Saratoga this year and a return to Showcase Day after finishing second in last year's Seeking The Ante. Foaled at Song Hill, the daughter of Into Mischief out of the Speightstown mare Speightful Lady runs in the \$200,000 Fleet Indian after finishing eighth in the Grade 1 Test Stakes Aug. 7. She also finished second in last year's Grade 3 Schuylerville and Grade 2 Adirondack.

“It's a good day for us, with Make Mischief in the race,” Mario Martinez said. “Speightful Lady (also mother of Speightful Kitten, \$220,000 earner) has done very well for us with some great offspring. We stopped selling horses and we are going to enjoy racing them ourselves.”

“It's a good day to spotlight the New York-breds. The New York breeding program has come a long way. It's an at-

tractive way to induce breeders to keep breeding in New York. There are significant financial advantages. As breeders, it's important to us that horses stay in New York.”

Hibiscus Stable bred a winner on Big Apple Showcase Day this spring at Belmont Park when Robin Sparkles took the off-the-turf Mount Vernon Stakes. With a broodmare band of about seven, the Hibiscus Stable also bred Yaddo contender and July 24 Saratoga winner Mike's Girl.

Foaled at Dr. Jerry Bilinski's Waldorf Farm in North Chatham, Mike's Girl is a 5-year-old daughter of Scat Daddy out of the Salt Lake mare Salt Water Reign who originally sold for \$160,000 at the 2017 Fasig-Tipton Saratoga New York-bred yearling sale. Hibiscus also bred Funny Guy, who earned \$638,645 and won the 2019 Albany on Saratoga Showcase Day, along with the Commentator, John Morrissey and a Stallion Series event in 2020.

“We focus mostly on New York breeding and racing,” said Jon Taisey, of Hibiscus. “We take a lot of pride in our breeding. The Showcase Days are fun. As a breeder, it's just as much fun as being the owner, when you watch them get to the track and be successful.”

Showcase Day kicks off at 1:05 p.m. Friday with the first stakes – the \$200,000 Seeking The Ante for 2-year-old fillies – at 1:41. Miss Alacrity, a daughter of Munnings bred by Milfer Farm who won the Colleen Stakes Aug. 1 at Monmouth Park, drew the rail in the field of six. The \$200,000 Funny Cide with a field of eight goes as the fourth at 2:47. Bob Hahn's homebred Golden-cents colt Daufuskie Island figures to vie for favoritism with Rick Violette winner Run Curtis Run, California shipper Montebello and Saratoga debut winners Senbei and Happy Happy B.

Make Mischief and eight others are entered in the 9-furlong Fleet Indian that goes as the seventh at 4:29. Rinaldi defends his title in the West Point, the eighth at 5:03, against the likes of Therapist, Mo Ready and Graded On A Curve. New York Derby winner Americanrevolution, a colt by Constitution bred by Fred Hertrich III and John Fielding, is one of nine entered for the 9-furlong Albany along with Bobby Bo, Bingo John and Purple Hearted. The Yaddo closes the stakes portion of the card as the 10th at 6:13. Defending champ Myhartblongstodady meets Classic Lady, Giacosa, Pecatonica and others in the 1 1/16-mile turf test.

Saratoga Leaders

TRAINERS	1ST
Mike Maker	23
Chad Brown	22
Todd Pletcher	21
Steve Asmussen	13
Bill Mott	13
Rob Atras	11
Christophe Clement.....	10
Brad Cox	10
Rudy Rodriguez	8
Wesley Ward	7

JOCKEYS	1ST
Luis Saez.....	49
Jose Ortiz.....	39
Irad Ortiz Jr.....	36
Tyler Gaffalione	28
Joel Rosario.....	27
Ricardo Santana Jr.....	21
Jose Lezcano	15
Dylan Davis.....	14
Manny Franco	13
John Velazquez	12

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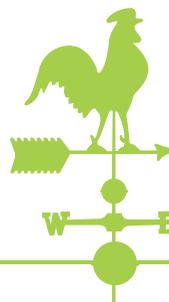
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THE HORSES
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HALL TALK

WITH MARK CASSE | TODD PLETCHER | JACK FISHER



Congratulations Hall of Famers.

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The Hall of Fame. The highest honor in racing – in anything really – beckons only a select few and the class of 2021 (and 2020 since racing missed the ceremony because of the coronavirus pandemic) is one of the most special in history as seven-time Eclipse Award winner Todd Pletcher goes in during his first year of eligibility and 13-time leading steeplechase trainer Jack Fisher joins him.

Technically inducted last year, trainer Mark Casse gets his due in 2021 after joining Canada's Hall in 2016. We get each to discuss a special horse in each edition. These aren't top 20 lists, just examples of the kinds of horses it takes to get trainers to the Hall of Fame.

We asked a simple question: Who got you here? And they answered.

Todd Pletcher

Always Dreaming. The second. A \$350,000 purchase by Steve Young at the 2015 Keeneland September yearling sale, Always Dreaming gave Pletcher his second Kentucky Derby victory in 2017. He started his career with trainer Domenick Schettino and owners Brooklyn Boyz Stables and MeB Racing Stables – finishing third and second in maiden races in New York – before being transferred to Pletcher late in his 2-year-old season. When he broke his maiden in late January 2017 at Tampa Bay Downs he'd picked up owners Teresa Viola Racing Stable and St. Elias Stable and by the time all was said and done he raced for that group plus Siena Farm and West Point Thoroughbreds. After the Tampa win Pletcher skipped the Fountain of Youth and won a Gulfstream Park allowance-optional to set up a 5-length Florida Derby victory. Five weeks later at sloppy and sealed Churchill Downs, the son of Bodemeister gave Pletcher a second Derby win to go with Super Saver's victory in 2010. He ran three more times that season – finishing eighth in the Preakness, third in the Jim Dandy and ninth in the Travers – and twice early in his 4-year-old season before joining the stallion roster at WinStar Farm.

"We picked him up late in his 2-year-old year, knew he had some ability and ran some good numbers. We went into it thinking we could potentially have a Derby horse so we laid out a schedule. He won the race at Tampa. The horse was training



Tod Marks

Always Dreaming gave Todd Pletcher a second win in the Kentucky Derby in 2017.

well enough that we thought about the Fountain of Youth for his second start off the layoff, then got with the connections and decided to take a more methodical approach to it, try the allowance race. The only risk to that was we were putting all our Kentucky Derby points eggs in one basket in the Florida Derby. Everyone was on board with that, agreed that if it was meant to be then that's the way it would happen. It worked out. He had the best winter and spring, you could just see him get better. You could see it in his races and he trained lights out when we got to Kentucky. He was actually so aggressive when we got to Kentucky ... got really strong. Aside from that it was definitely the most confident we've been going into a Derby. It

was weird that for such a gentleman that he all of a sudden when we got to Churchill a beast came out in him. He showed it in his work and in his gallops, just so impressive and into his training. So we had to make some adjustments. His one breeze there was lights out and then it was pins and needles trying to keep him on the ground until race day."

Mark Casse

Shamrock Rose. Manfred and Penny Conrad spent \$120,000 for Pennsylvania-bred daughter of First Dude at the 2017 OBS April 2-year-olds in training sale and five months later she became a

Continued On Page 39

Hall Talk —

Continued from page 38

stakes winner when she took the Ontario Debutante at Woodbine in her debut. Casse ran her 12 more times, 11 in stakes and she won five. Four came consecutively when it counts the most, from August to November in the Malvern Rose at Presque Isle Downs, La Lorgnette at Woodbine, Grade 2 Raven Run at Keeneland and two weeks later in the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Sprint at Churchill Downs. That stretch, topped by her last-to-first win in the Filly and Mare Sprint under Irad Ortiz Jr., locked up the Eclipse Award for champion female sprinter. She retired after an abbreviated season in 2019, making just three starts, then sold for \$2.5 million at the Fasig-Tipton Kentucky November mixed sale.

"She's got to be on the list. She won a Breeders' Cup for us. I got to spend a lot of time with Allen Jerkens when I was younger and he always would tell me, 'I don't understand trainers. Run them when they're good, give them a rest when they're running bad.' Her form tailed off the spring and I sent her home to our training center and they did a great job of getting her back. When she came back she was a terror. ... The Presque Isle win was a big boost in getting her confidence and I'm a big believer in confidence. Her race at Keeneland was exceptional. I owe it to the owners, they supplemented her to the Breeders' Cup. It was \$130,000 for them to run. They had that much faith in me. I knew it was a tall task, but she was an exceptional filly."

Jack Fisher

Straight To It. Continuing a long line of successful steeplechase horses (All Together, Seer, Special Skills, etc.) to come from New Jersey-based flat trainer Alan Goldberg, the \$500,000 yearling jumped right into his second career after three fruitless starts on the flat, winning eight races and \$276,380 for Fisher's mother-in-law, Sheila Williams, Andre Brewster and later Northwoods Stable.

The son of Giant's Causeway won twice over hurdles, finished second in the Grade 3 Zeke Ferguson Stakes and followed Fisher's move with an early switch to timber.

Slower and longer, those races became a playground for the chestnut gelding who won six races, including three stakes, over the wooden obstacles. He ran in parts of 10 years, retiring at age 12 in 2018.

"He was another Goldberg horse. I knew what he had, nice, well-bred horses who had been taken care of on the flat. He called me about Seer, he wasn't cheap, I thought he was too expensive so I bought him myself. I ran him one time on the flat at Colonial and he won and I got a text from Goldberg, 'That's enough.'

"Straight To It was an easy ride, a little feminine to be honest. He went as far as he could go over hurdles and then we switched him to timber. He was with Andre and Sheila and then Mike Hankin took over when Andre died and now he's a fox hunter for Mike. I never got to ride him, the girls always rode him. He was not a tough horse to train, any idiot could have trained him, easy horse to train, just did his thing. To be honest, I never knew he made that much money."



Tod Marks

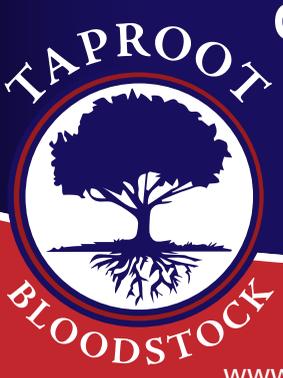
Straight To It jumps a fence at Willowdale in 2018.

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Maidenly Virtues

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How can you possibly pick the winner of a race made up entirely of horses who've never won a race? To add more uncertainty, often most of the entrants have never even been in a race before.

Who can tell what these 1,000-pound-plus babies might do coming to the paddock for the first time. And then parading out to the track where 25,000 fans are watching them. Who can tell?

Well, one possibility is that during the post parade a filly might buck her jockey, make a break for the exit, gallop onto Interstate-69 and run on her own for half an hour. Does this sound like a far-fetched scene from some Disney movie? That's exactly what happened last Friday at Ellis Park in Kentucky when a 2-year-old, unraced maiden, aptly named Bold And Brassy, decided she didn't want to race that day.

And while this may be an extreme example, it's not the only one. The bottom line is: anything can happen in a 2-year-old maiden race. And often does.

Early this season, my editor sent all the interns our marching orders: "Give our readers a sense of what's exciting at Saratoga; what are the things that make Saratoga Saratoga."

Well, of course, there are the big stakes races; the horse, jockey and trainer stories; there's the whole history of the track and the meet and even the very atmosphere of this historic town itself.

But for me a big part of Saratoga excitement is in these unpredictable maiden races. And these maiden special weight races here are more important now than ever before.

At this point I get to hear my fellow intern, Mary Eddy, burst into laughter, as she does every time

I start a sentence with the words, "When I was a kid." (It's true I have a half-century head start on Mary, but I know she mentally pictures me in sepia photos snapped during the Chester A. Arthur administration. I sometimes treat her to nostalgic stories of the days before the microwave oven.)

Anyway ... "When I was a kid," racehorses ran a lot earlier and a lot more often in their 2-year-old years. I remember 3-furlong sprints for juveniles in January and February at Hialeah. (Heck, I remember Hialeah.) I remember 2-year-olds sometimes running a dozen or more races in their debut years. Well, that was my impression anyway.

But rather than blithely foisting off a memory as fact, I did a little research to test my memory. The first Kentucky Derby I remember watching was Hill Gail's 1952 victory. (It was also the first Derby on television, Mary.) So, I took the five Derby winners from 1952 to '56 and checked how many races they ran at 2.

Those five averaged 8.6 races as 2-year-olds and started racing as early as February.

The last five Derby winners (2017-21) averaged only 1.2 races at 2. And the earliest any of them started racing was in July. Clearly there has been a sea change in the thinking about how and when to run the 2s, but I wasn't sure why.

I asked some people I thought might know. Veteran trainer Tony Dutrow said "It's no one thing. It's harder and faster track surfaces that make us less inclined to risk injury to a young horse's bones. It's the breeding nowadays, more for speed than soundness – more on the Mr. Prospector model than the Northern Dancer. They're brittle now.

"Also I think horses used to be raised to race; today breeders raise horses to sell. So they're babied a bit, they're protected and they aren't as tough."

J.J. Pletcher, a longtime trainer and father of Hall of Famer Todd, didn't think twice. "It's the money," he said immediately.

"In the old days you'd look at the Champagne Stakes or the Hopeful at 2. And they're still important, but now you train up to the 3-year-old races. You have to, the money is so much more."

However one explains the change, it's real. Trainers now put off racing their potential star 2-year-olds until later in the year. And this means that more well-bred, speedy – and expensive – colts and fillies come to Saratoga for their debuts.

The Saratoga meet has become a major coming-out party for the best and brightest stars of their year. And their big stage is maiden special weight races.

"If you watched all these races," said Dutrow, "you've no doubt had an early look at a future champion or two. That's how good the quality of the horses is here."

There's no denying that money is also a big part of these races. The first race last Saturday had a field of eight, and the winner, first-time starter Major General, was purchased at auction for \$420,000. That's a chunk of change. And it would be easy to think: well sure, if you put out that kind of money for a colt, you get a winner. Easy, until you see that in that race he beat a \$600,000 auction colt, a \$700,000 one and another that went for a million.

In another maiden special weight race that day, My Prankster won a laughter coasting home by 10 lengths. The trainer of the \$600,000 winner was Todd Pletcher and his father was with him in the winner's enclosure after the race. I asked the senior Pletcher if the owners, Robert and Lawana Low, were there.

"No," said J.J., "they're in Missouri, but I wonder if they might be at least thinking about Kentucky right now."

Maiden races are wildly unpredictable, full of intense anticipation, drama and excitement. You won't fall asleep watching a maiden race, but if you're an owner, you just might start dreaming.



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Tod Marks

Two-year-old My Prankster zips to a debut maiden win at Saratoga Saturday.

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Racing Office

The New York Racing Association announced the departure of senior vice president of racing operations Martin Panza earlier this meet. On Hall of Fame Day, actually. Hard to believe that's nearly three weeks ago but as anybody in Saratoga knows, time flies and stalls all at the same time during this eight-week carnival.

We've heard rumors about why Panza is leaving and we've heard rumors about who's coming next. A proper newspaper would enlist its reporting team to get the scoop. Alas, we do our best. Eight issues and 18 days after the announcement, we realize we haven't broached the monumental change in the racing department.

Panza has been at the helm of the sport's best year-round racing circuit since 2013 and will leave after the Belmont fall meet Oct. 31. The longtime racing executive made major changes to the stakes schedule, bundling stakes on Belmont Stakes Day, Whitney Day and Travers Day. He helped create the Belmont Stakes Racing Festival, the Stars and Stripes Racing Festival and The Turf Triple Series. Panza has played a role in NYRA's safety and integrity initiative, concentrating on the gradual phasing out of Lasix in 2-year-old races and stakes races. Panza chaired the NTRA Safety Committee, launched in 2019, to help implement guidelines to improve the safety of horses and jockeys.

And since this is a column space, I'll congratulate Panza on helping to improve the racing product at Saratoga. Belmont Park and Aqueduct are not my beats. We don't agree with everything he's done but we agree that it's way better than when he started.

As for his successor, when it comes to Saratoga...

Along with Glen Kozak, concentrate on the training facilities. The off-season improvements to the Oklahoma track have proved invaluable this summer, providing a safe surface especially after roof-rattling rainstorms this meet. What else can be done?

Is there a way to reinvent the Horse Haven track to allow for horses to jog, one direction, at certain times? Can NYRA somehow make a deal with Darley to use its synthetic track? How about jogging trails along the bottom of the hill and replacing backstretch macadam with safe horse paths? Anybody interested in starting a proper equine health facility, offering horses therapeutic ways to alleviate stress and soreness. Run and get a free salt-water spa treatment, a hyperbaric chamber treatment. If we take care of our horses, they'll take care of the cards.

Be careful minimizing the rest of the cards while bolstering Saturday cards. I understand the importance of selling a signal, but Saratoga is the last bastion of sport, where fans want to see good horses every day. The New York-bred Showcase, the Travers Day stakes jam, the five stakes on Whitney Day are too much, horses and races get lost in the shuffle while other cards are forgotten. The Summer Colony, Coronation Cup, Galway, Better Talk Now are the features on four Sundays at Saratoga. The Forbidden Apple, Tale Of The Cat, Skidmore and Lucky Coin serve as Friday features. It's top heavy. Be careful of a crash.

Steeplechasing. Demand a quality product but keep the light on for a sport that is a natural brother to flat racing. You knew I'd go there.

Keep the balance of turf sprints. There was a time when there were none at Saratoga. There was a time when there were more. Adding more might bolster the handle but a short-term gain can become a long-term loss.

Keep the distance races. This is one of the last places where stamina can still be key. Turf and dirt. In the U.S., racetracks have marginalized stamina horses, lessening their value and further winnowing the gene pool. If they don't fill, let the races go once or twice with short fields, trainers will adjust and enter the next time.

Forty days is enough.

Protect the little guy. This is easier said than done, but it's imperative to allow small trainers to play this sport. Incentivize them, don't penalize them. It's for the health of the game.

Don't bury the little tracks. Perhaps, this is out of your reach, but the sport needs as many venues to survive. It's where fans are made, contributors are nourished, seeds are sown. Every summer, I ask owners and trainers how they got started in racing.

Gary West, after winning the Travers, said he went to Aksarben because he loved to gamble, he fell in love with the sport and vowed that someday he would make enough money to own horses. Rob Atras grew up at Assiniboia Downs, a bullring gem in western Canada, he's now training horses in Saratoga. Ned Allard comes to town this week with a stakes horse, he made it big at Rockingham Park and Suffolk Downs. Kevin Kahkola, who prepped Alabama winner Malathaat for Shadwell Farm at his base in South Carolina, grew up going to Detroit Race Course.

Joe and I grew up at Delaware Park and spent summers bouncing between Atlantic City, Garden State Park, Bowie and other tracks long gone.

Paint the barns. Fix the roofs. Clean up the trash. It will cost more later if you don't.

Concentrate on backstretch presence. There can't be a divide between the frontside and backside. When horsemen are in the trenches and they feel like the executives are on dry land, the sport suffers. Think about finding another Bruce Johnstone or someone to play the vital role in keeping a line of communication, a thread of community between the two groups. Actually, it shouldn't be two groups, it should be seen as one group, all aiming and striving for the same thing – a healthy racing product in New York, an industry standard, an industry leader.

As for Panza, thanks for the effort and we wish you well in your next move.

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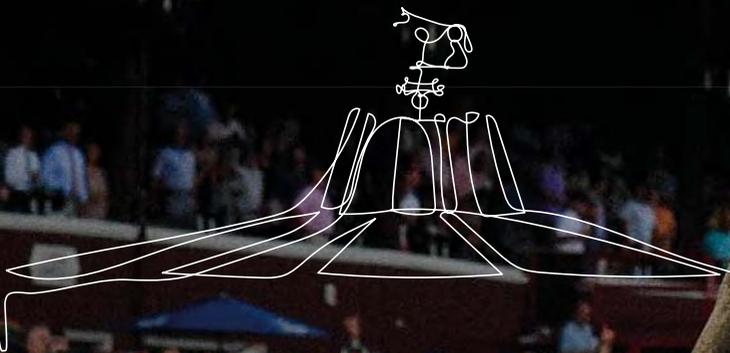
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