

Year 15 • No. 6

Friday, July 31, 2015

The Saratoga Special

Saratoga's Daily Newspaper on Thoroughbred Racing

Mud Music

Veteran Moonlight Song returns in style

- Curlin Stakes draws deep group
- John Terranova stable tour
- Entries & Handicapping

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Flying Fish. An osprey was the high rod at a recent fishing outing on the Shenandoah.

Douglas Lees

here&there... at Saratoga

BY THE NUMBERS

27: Horses waiting to go on the main track as the break ended Thursday morning.

7: Days into the meet that The Special's Joe Clancy figured out the server's static IP address was incorrect for the router, causing the network to not quite interface correctly (now at least the computers talk to each other).

1: Blacksmith working out of a Lincoln Continental Thursday morning.

BACKSIDE DEFINITION OF THE DAY

Shack-in-law: A man who lives with your daughter.

NAMES OF THE DAY

Partly Mocha, first race. He's been here before, we think, but the 6-year-old is by Half Ours out of Chocolate Mon.

River Date, fifth race. The 3-year-old colt is by Pioneerof The Nile out of How Bout Tonight.

I'll Call, sixth race. Subtle, but the Augustin Stable 5-year-old is by Smart Strike out of Recording.

WORTH REPEATING

"I use the ultrasound on myself after a run. The pain is still there, but everything looks good."
Veterinarian Dr. Luis Castro, budding star triathlete

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here&there... at Saratoga

WORTH REPEATING

“Learn Chinese, people will understand you better.”

Assistant trainer Theresa Dimpfel, to Irish jump jockey Willie McCarthy

“Glad I’m not riding today.”

Jump jockey Paddy Young, as thunder rumbled in the distance Thursday (turns out, nobody was riding a jump race Thursday)

“You didn’t miss much.”

Jock’s agent Angel Cordero Jr., to the comment ‘We missed you at golf yesterday.’

“I don’t know what that means.”

The Special’s Kaitlyn Vishneowski, after Sean Clancy shouted “Palace broke bad” at the start of Thursday’s John Morrissey

“Next, the Pulitzer Prize.”

Tom Gallo to The Special’s Joe Clancy, who won an Eclipse Award last year

“Do I look like a sporting guy?”

Gallo, on running horses in races with small purses

“I brought him to Monmouth Park and he was like Elvis.”

Trainer Jack Fisher, after his father, retired trainer Dr. John Fisher, visited racetracks this summer



Hey, Sunshine. Trainer Julie Gomena flashes some bright colors during an otherwise gray day at the track before Thursday’s first race (which was canceled). Tod Marks

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“Sometimes, we’re not perfect, sometimes we go a little wide or we think things are going to work out and they don’t. Things happen.”

Jockey Irad Ortiz, about the art of riding races



800-523-8143

NAME OF THE DAY

OPIE: Use your imagination a little. The Fitzhugh (Robert Meyerhoff) homebred filly is by Lemon Drop Kid out of Sticky. If Barney gave Opie Taylor a lemon drop, the boy would get sticky.

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here&there... at Saratoga

WORTH REPEATING

"I tried to ride Paul Saylor's bike once, I couldn't reach the pedals."

Retired jockey Jose Santos

"You should put dot-to-dots in here."

Agent Jason Beides, after hearing The Special should use more photos for people who can't read

"You only spelled Esler wrong once."

Kip Elser, after reading Thursday's column about trainer Nick Esler (which types very similarly to Elser)

"Thin this morning. I guess I shouldn't say that. You don't ask me how many races I've won at the meet, do you?"

Agent Steve Bass, to The Special's Sean Clancy, while handling a Thursday edition of The Special

"It was a little easier than the assistant trainer's test."

Assistant trainer Catherine Toner, after taking the bar exam last weekend

"I don't want to come here and starve but one day, I'm sure, I'll come here to stay."

Jockey Florent Geroux, before flying back to Arlington Park

"Physically, she was beautiful and all class, that was the one thing that struck me when I saw her. I didn't question that she could come back at 6, she was lightly raced and they had taken care of her. I felt very comfortable about that."

Bloodstock agent Marette Farrell, after picking out Diana winner Hard Not To Like at Keeneland November



Tod Marks

Hello Mudder. Rafael Hernandez came back with a faceful of mud after Thursday's sixth race.



Mill Ridge Moments

John Stephen Hockensmith ©

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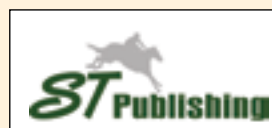
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Stable Tour:

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John Terranova



John Terranova's barn at Belmont Park was bustling with activity this spring and summer. The just turned 45-year-old trainer sent out 39 starters at the spring-summer stand, won eight races and hit the board in 13 others for a strike rate of 54 percent in the money.

That activity kept things busy, but it paled in comparison to the scene there the first week of June when Kentucky Derby, Preakness and eventual Belmont Stakes and Triple Crown winner American Pharoah bedded down in the barn at the back of the stable area not far from Hempstead Turnpike. The association between John and Tonja Terranova and American Pharoah's trainer Bob Baffert goes back a long way, to when Tonja worked as an assistant to the California-based Hall of Famer.

"That was really neat," John Terranova said of American Pharoah this week while he trained from his usual spot out of Barn 25 on the backstretch of Saratoga's main track. "The horses didn't get disturbed, he didn't get disturbed, nobody seemed to care. It was great, really as easy as can be. Nothing changed day-to-day other than there were a lot of people hanging around. It all worked out very nice. They put us in a nice new barn down there. It's a great barn, set up perfect."

They were glad to be hosts for the week and not long after racing's 12th Triple Crown winner headed home to Santa Anita, a new group of 2-year-olds arrived for Zayat Stables, which also campaign American Pharoah.

Many of those Zayat babies stayed at Belmont, where Tonja oversees things while John runs the show in Saratoga. The Saratoga string of 16, which is expected to swell to 20 when



more youngsters arrive soon, includes some forward juveniles and established older horses for a variety of clients including Sovereign Stable and Long Lake Stables.

Terranova only sent out one starter through the first seven days here and won't saddle his second until Draft Day goes in Saturday's finale.

Terranova, already just \$200,000 shy of eclipsing his purse earnings from 2014, talked about a few of the horses with The Special's Tom Law.

El Kabeir: "He's just getting started. You'll see him in the fall. We kicked him out at KESMARC, for about 60 days. That was the beginning of May. So June, July, he came back in the first week of July and now he's been back in training for about two weeks. Jogging and stuff like that. We're taking our time, getting him ready as time goes by and hopefully you'll see him later in the year. He's good. We'll see how and when he's ready and what's

around and get started from there."

Ancient Goddess: "She's a French-bred filly that I'm going to run in the Coronation Cup Monday for Sovereign. She's doing really well. She won a stakes up in Canada (the Star Shoot Stakes April 12), a turf sprint for 3-year-old fillies. The Coronation Cup should be a good spot for her. She was third in the P.G. Johnson last summer in her first start (in the U.S.). It's going to come down to the trip."

Flying Point: "She's a First Dude filly. Hasn't started yet. We may see her toward the end of the meet. She breezed up here the other day (3 furlongs in :36.89 July 23). Long Lake Stables owns her. She came out of a yearling sale last year."

Monte Man: "Long Lake Stables owns him, too. He's by Custom For Carlos. Eddie Kenneally had Custom For Carlos a few years ago, good

Every day at Saratoga, The Special (with help from sponsor Fasig-Tipton) presents an exclusive Stable Tour with a Saratoga trainer. For more, see: thisishorseracing.com/stabletours

sprinter, by More Than Ready. He stands in Louisiana and this is his first crop. Both him and Flying Point are pretty forward, look like they have a bit of talent right now. He looks like an older horse. He came up here and went way forward in a week."

Draft Day: "He's in Saturday. He's a Kitten's Joy New York-bred for Sovereign. He won first time out, sprinting on the turf. He'll go in an a-other-than New York-breds. He's a fast horse. Pure sprinter. The Kitten's Joys are pretty generous. They do it for you. That's the only one I've ever had. We're 1-for-1 with them."

Z Ponti: He's a nice Gio Ponti 2-year-old for Zayat. He came in and I like him so far. He'll get on grass at some point. It's his first crop. I don't know if we'll see him up here."

Picture Day: "She ran the other day, finished third in a maiden special weight. That was her second start. She's been third-third maiden special weight. She's a 3-year-old Include filly for Sovereign. She ran well, got caught down inside for quite a bit of the way and finished up really well. It was a good race. I'll hopefully run her back at the end of the meet. She wants to stretch a little bit. She ran 6 and then 7 furlongs the other day. She still probably wants a little more ground in front of her. Maybe we'll get a mile and an eighth later in the meet."



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The Chief . . . Day 6

"I tried to watch all the good horses. I'll never forget when Assault was a 4-year-old and I was at Aqueduct, 1947. Anyway, he came over there, he was stabled at Belmont and worked a mile-and-an-eighth on Thursday, he was running on Saturday. Max Hirsch worked him with two horses. He won going a mile-and-a-quarter, carrying 135 pounds. It's amazing, the concept has completely turned around. Being around horses, I always say, a horse can be his own worst enemy. He'll give you more when he's light on in his feet and fresh, but it'll ruin him. That's what makes it so tough to train. You'll get away with running a horse that is extra fit and they win and then you figure that's what you do with all of them. But you don't know which ones it really hurts in the end."

- **Trainer Allen Jerkens,**
1929-2015



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Tod Marks photo



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Old School: Trainer Robbie Davis hangs a sign from the old days.
 Sean Clancy photo



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Turning Point

Smart Transition aims to step out as 2nd half begins for 3-year-olds

BY TOM LAW

Smart Transition isn't the only 3-year-old colt that is also the first foal of a hugely successful race-mare in trainer John Shirreffs' barn, nor is he the most well known.

That spot belongs to Cozmic One. He's the first foal out of Horse of the Year, three-time champion older female and \$7,304,580-earner Zenyatta. Winless in two starts, he isn't close to following in his mother's footsteps although he deserves a pass

Jack Clancy
Smart Transition gets
a lead from the stable pony.



because, seriously, who could?

The career of Smart Transition is on a better track.

The first foal of the Brazilian-bred Zardana enters today's \$100,000 Curlin Stakes with a victory and two placings in five career starts. She shared

Shirreffs' barn with Zenyatta and Breeders' Cup Distaff winner Life Is Sweet, earning a stripe with a victory over Horse of the Year Rachel Alexandra in 2008.

See **CURLIN** page 12 ▶

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Curlin —

■ Continued from page 10

Smart Transition, 5-1 fourth choice in the field of seven for the Curlin (today's fourth race) that probably won't stay together due to cross entering, also looks to post an upset in the race for 3-year-olds without a graded stakes win in 2015.

"I really like Smart Transition because he's out of Zardana," Shirreffs said outside his barn on the Oklahoma Training Track Thursday morning, unclipping his Tipperary riding helmet minutes after hopping off his stable pony. "This is her first foal. He's a really nice horse and it's been fun to have him."

Bred and owned by Arnold Zetcher, who campaigned Zardana and owns 2015 Kentucky Derby runner-up Firing Line, Smart Transition was nominated to the spring classics. He wasn't quite ready for that stage and didn't debut until late February at Santa Anita Park. The son of Smart Strike broke his maiden in his third start, going 1 1/16 miles around two turns April 30. After traveling with

Shirreffs' string to the East Coast for the spring, summer and fall, he finished third in a Belmont Park allowance going the same distance June 6.

Fourth in the Grade 3 Dwyer going a mile around one turn last time at Belmont, Smart Transition moves back to two turns for the 1 1/8-mile Curlin.

"That's why he's in here," Shirreffs said. "We thought two turns would work well for him."

Unlike Zardana, Smart Transition brings a pretty laid-back attitude to the table. He's also got a bit more size than his dam, who came to the U.S. from her native country in 2008 and was initially trained by Ron McAnally. Shirreffs took over in 2009 and won three stakes on the main track and one on the grass. Finding just the right spot was tough back then, with Shirreffs juggling for spots with his top mares.

"It was a tough year for Zardana because in that barn I had Zenyatta and Life Is Sweet and then Zardana," he said.

Smart Transition looks like a dirt horse and trains like a dirt horse that wants to go long. After Kelvyn Henry got a leg up on the bay colt just a



Tod Marks

Stanford is entered in today's Curlin, but also in Saturday's West Virginia Derby.

little past 8:15, they made a leisurely walk down the road that splits the barns on the turn of the Oklahoma, through the Horse Haven barns and on the path that was the Horse Haven track to the Union Avenue gate.

He was nothing but chilled the whole way, even though the humidity

was high and the temperature crept close to 80 without a lot of sunshine.

"He's laid back but once he gets warmed up he can be a bit of a pain," Henry said as they walked alongside the pony, eventually making their

See **CURLIN** page 13 ►

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Curlin —

■ Continued from page 12

way to the backyard and to the horse-path that leads to the paddock.

Less than 15 minutes after leaving the barn they were in the paddock. Shirreffs, on his pony, showed up a few minutes later with another one to school. After a few turns all the way around the paddock, some time in a stall under the awning and standing on the path that leads to the racetrack, Smart Transition started to get a little edgy. Anxious maybe, not aggressive, but definitely ready to go.

Smart Transition and Henry were close to the first ones on the fresh track and they went to work quickly. They broke off from the pony at the 7 1/2-furlong pole and were into a smooth gallop by the time they hit the back straight. Henry pulled Smart Transition up not far past the spot where they started and a couple minutes later they were back with the pony and walking home the same way they came.

“Zardana was very tough, really hard to handle in a race and galloping,” Shirreffs said. “Smart Transition is much kinder, but he has that desire that she had. He has that will to win that she did.”

Six others are entered in the Curlin, which produced last year’s Travers winner V. E. Day.

Three are cross-entered in Saturday’s West Virginia Derby at Mountaineer Racetrack – Long Branch winner Stanford, Grade 3 Pegasus runner-up Tekton and Dwyer third Tommy Macho.

Todd Pletcher trains Stanford and Tommy Macho and those two are part of a large group of 3-year-olds in their trainer’s care with major engagements this weekend. Pletcher also entered Competitive Edge in Saturday’s Grade 2 Jim Dandy at Saratoga and Sunday’s Grade 1 Haskell Invitational against Triple Crown winner American Pharoah at Monmouth Park. Pletcher also entered longshots Nonna’s Boy and Don’tbetwithbruno in the Haskell.

The other three in the Curlin are not entered in other spots – Keeneland maiden winner and Long Branch fourth Battle Midway for Nick Zito, Parx Derby runner-up Unrivaled for Marya Montoya and Grade 3 American Derby fourth King Of New York for Ken McPeck.

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SARATOGA ENTRIES

Friday, July 31.

1ST (1:00PM). \$50,000, CLM \$25,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 5 1/2F (TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 5, Daily Double					
1	1	Partly Mocha	M. Franco	G. Weaver	3-1
2	MTO	Isthmus	L. Saez	M. Trombetta	5-2
3	3	Strong Impact	J. Castellano	B. Brown	5-2
4	4	Great Attack	C. Velasquez	D. Jacobson	5-1
5	5	Luigi P	F. Jara	A. Bizelia	20-1
6	6	Slamarama	E. Trujillo	J. Toscano, Jr.	8-1
7	MTO	Va Banque		R. Rodriguez	6-5
8	8	Political Farce	L. Saez	G. Contessa	12-1
9	MTO	Gentrify	F. Jara	L. Lewis	6-1
10	10	Mish Mosh	I. Ortiz, Jr.	S. Asmusen	4-1
11	11	Z Big Apple	E. Cancel	D. Lukas	10-1
12	MTO	Ganador		O. Barrera, III	30-1
13	MTO	Francis Freud		R. Metivier	30-1

2ND (1:33PM). \$45,000, MCL \$40,000, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M, 1M (INNER TURF)

Exacta, Quinella, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 4, Daily Double					
1	1	Violet Road	J. Alvarado	L. Becdelamotte	15-1
2	2	Into the Storm	A. Cintron	J. Lawrence, II	15-1
3	3	Summer Chant	L. Saez	T. Pletcher	4-1
4	4	Pound Sterling	J. Ortiz	T. Bush	15-1
5	5	Hundred Year Storm	I. Ortiz, Jr.	C. Brown	3-1
6	6	Break Away	J. Castellano	G. Contessa	7-2
7	7	Opie	E. Trujillo	M. Trombetta	12-1
8	8	Ballerinas Image	F. Jara	R. Barbara	20-1
9	9	Killarney Rose	J. Rosario	C. Clement	5-1
10	10	Mama's Red Hat	I. Rodriguez	J. Quiles	20-1
11	11	Starship Hostility	E. Cancel	A. Iwinski	30-1
12	12	Myself	P. Lopez	B. Walsh	15-1
13	AE	Mia and Molly	J. Lezcano	W. Mott	4-1
14	AE	Antrim Colleen	A. Arroyo	K. McLaughlin	6-1
15	AE	Kitten's Angel	J. Castellano	M. Maker	6-1
16	AE	La Dama de Hierro	C. Sullivan	M. Shevy	50-1

3RD (2:06PM). \$50,000, CLM \$25,000, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M, 6 1/2F

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double					
1	1	Run a Dubb Dubb	L. Saez	J. Englehart	6-1
2	2	Lady Gracenote	C. Velasquez	D. Balsamo	8-1
3	3	Bridget Moloney	J. Ortiz	M. Nevin	12-1
4	4	Princess Jenny	E. Cancel	H. Bond	30-1
5	5	Desert Bliss	K. Carmouche	G. Matties	12-1
6	6	Champagne Ruby	T. Rice	L. Rice	8-1
7	7	Bridgetta	P. Lopez	B. Brown	20-1
8	8	Desert Valentine	I. Ortiz, Jr.	G. Contessa	15-1
9	9	What the Frost	J. Castellano	P. Farro	10-1
10	10	Jet Majesty	J. Rosario	W. Ward	1-1

4TH (2:39PM). \$100,000, STK - THE CURLIN, 3 YO, 1 1/8M

Exacta, Quinella, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double					
1	1	Battle Midway	J. Ortiz	N. Zito	30-1
2	2	Stanford	J. Velazquez	T. Pletcher	5-2
3	3	Tekton	A. Cintron	A. Dutrow	3-1
4	4	Unrivaed	J. Lezcano	M. Montoya	15-1
5	5	Smart Transition	J. Alvarado	J. Shirreffs	5-1
6	6	King of New York	C. Lanerie	K. McPeek	12-1
7	7	Tommy Macho	J. Castellano	T. Pletcher	2-1

5TH (3:13PM). \$83,000, MSW, 3 YO'S & UP, 1 1/8M

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 6, Daily Double					
1	3	Godrevy	J. Castellano	T. Albertrani	6-1
1a	4	Tradesman	L. Saez	T. Albertrani	6-1
2	1	River Date	K. Carmouche	D. Cannizzo	20-1
3	2	Gangster	J. Ortiz	T. Pletcher	10-1
4	5	All Rise	J. Lezcano	W. Mott	8-1
5	6	Arbitrator	J. Rosario	C. Clement	6-1
6	7	Captain Tim	J. Alvarado	J. Shirreffs	5-2
7	8	Securitz	I. Ortiz, Jr.	J. Jerkens	5-1
8	9	Indian Trail	J. Velazquez	T. Pletcher	3-1

6TH (3:47PM). \$90,000, AOC \$62,500, 3 YO'S & UP, 1 3/8M (INNER TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double					
1	8	Comes the Dream	J. Alvarado	G. Weaver	5-1
1a	10	Sly Tom	L. Saez	B. Lynch	5-1
2	1	I'll Call	J. Velazquez	H. Motion	15-1
3	2	Da Big Hoss	I. Ortiz, Jr.	M. Maker	6-1
4	3	O'Prado Ole	J. Lejaroux	C. Clement	6-1
5	4	Global Strike	J. Castellano	T. Pletcher	3-1
6	5	Mills	C. Velasquez	D. Jacobson	20-1
7	6	Indycott	J. Ortiz	J. Sharp	20-1
8	7	Heyaarat	J. Rosario	K. McLaughlin	5-1
9	9	Artic North	S. Bridgmohan	D. Cannizzo	4-1
10	MTO	Escapefromreality		D. Schettino	5-2

7TH (4:21PM). \$83,000, MSW, 3 YO'S & UP, 7F

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 4, Daily Double					
1	1	Street Jersey	P. Lopez	B. Tagg	8-1
2	2	Kabang	J. Castellano	T. Albertrani	7-2
3	3	Chomsky	J. Rosario	M. Hennig	12-1
4	4	Wind Damage	C. Velasquez	R. Rodriguez	15-1
5	5	Sharm	L. Saez	D. Lukas	20-1
6	6	Choir Director	J. Lezcano	N. Zito	6-1
7	7	Vitiate	M. Franco	R. Ribardo	12-1
8	8	Cavallucci (IRE)	I. Ortiz, Jr.	K. McLaughlin	8-1
9	9	Revelation	A. Cintron	H. Motion	8-1
10	10	Tennessee	J. Velazquez	T. Pletcher	3-1
11	11	Mountain Cry	J. Ortiz	N. Zito	20-1

8TH (4:55PM). \$90,000, AOC \$62,500, 3 YO'S & UP, 5 1/2F (TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double					
1	1	Tripski	J. Lejaroux	E. Kenneally	6-1
2	2	Wild Mongolia	A. Cruz	E. Ganbat	15-1
3	3	Manhattan Johnnie	L. Saez	J. Englehart	20-1
4	4	Yes I'm Lucky	P. Lopez	E. Plesa, Jr.	20-1
5	5	Brickyard Kitten	J. Velazquez	B. Perkins, Jr.	5-1
6	6	Sandy'z Slew	A. Serpa	R. Schosberg	3-1
7	7	Thomas Hill	J. Alvarado	B. Brown	30-1
8	8	Stormy Rocit	E. Cancel	G. Weaver	8-1
9	9	Pure Sensation	J. Rosario	C. Clement	4-1
10	10	Bye Bye Bernie	K. Carmouche	B. Walsh	15-1
11	11	Night Officer	M. Franco	B. Brown	20-1
12	12	Great Minds	J. Castellano	A. Stall, Jr.	6-1
13	AE	Two Notch Road	E. Trujillo	G. Thompson	10-1
14	MTO	Nubin Ridge		C. Englehart	6-1

9TH (5:29PM). \$93,000, AOC \$80,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 1 1/8M






Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Daily Double					
1	1	Cousin Stephen	K. Carmouche	C. Brown	4-1
2	2	Matterhorn	J. Castellano	T. Pletcher	5-1
3	3	Lucky Lotto	A. Cruz	E. Barker	20-1
4	4	Our Caravan	A. Cintron	M. Dilger	8-1
5	5	Catholic Cowboy	J. Lezcano	N. Zito	7-2
6	6	Touchofstarquality	J. Ortiz	M. Nevin	2-1
7	7	Big Looie	C. Velasquez	D. Jacobson	6-1

10TH (6:03PM). \$83,000, MSW, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M, 5 1/2F (TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta					
1	1	Diva Express	J. Lejaroux	M. Casse	6-1
2	2	Sudestada	J. Castellano	T. Albertrani	15-1
3	3	Zeezee Zoomzoom	M. Franco	A. Tarrant	30-1
4	4	Hardcore	R. Hernandez	W. Ward	5-2
5	5	She Hung the Moon	J. Velazquez	T. Pletcher	6-1
6	6	Neilinger	E. Cancel	G. Contessa	20-1
7	7	May Flowers	L. Saez	J. Englehart	4-1
8	8	Zip's Legacy	S. Bridgmohan	M. Casse	12-1
9	9	Zenne	C. Sullivan	P. Meadow	50-1
10	10	Sweet Fortune	A. Cintron	M. Trombetta	5-1
11	11	Nimble Foot (IRE)	J. Lezcano	A. Goldberg	8-1
12	12	French Dressing	F. Jara	J. Hertler	30-1

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the
**Power
grid**

Race #	 John Shapazian	 Tom Law	 Gaile Fitzgerald	 Charles Bedard	 Chad Summers
1	Va Banque Strong Impact Partly Mocha	Partly Mocha Strong Impact Slamarama	Va Banque Strong Impact Partly Mocha	Va Banque Great Attack Partly Mocha	Gentrify Mish Mosh Political Farce
2	Hundred Year Storm Summer Chant Break Away	Hundred Year Storm Summer Chant Killarney Rose	Summer Chant Mia And Molly Killarney Rose	Summer Chant Hundred Year Storm Break Away	Summer Chant Killarney Rose Hundred Year Storm
3	Jet Majesty What The Frost Run A Dubb Dubb	Jet Majesty What The Frost Champagne Ruby	Jet Majesty Desert Bliss What The Frost	Jet Majesty Lady Gracernote Run A Dubb Dubb	Jet Majesty What The Frost Desert Bliss
4	Tommy Macho Stanford Tekton	Smart Transition Stanford Tommy Macho	Stanford Tekton King Of New York	Tommy Macho Tekton Unrivaed	Smart Transition Tekton Stanford
5	Captain Tim Indian Trail All Rise	Captain Tim Indian Trail Securitized	Captain Tim Indian Trail All Rise	Arbitrator Captain Tim Indian Trail	Securitized Indian Trail Arbitrator
6	Escapefromreality Global Strike O'Prado Ole	Global Strike Heyaarat Sly Tom	Escapefromreality Da Big Hoss Arctic North	Escapefromreality Hill entry Global Strike	Indycott Artic North Global Strike
7	Kabang Tennessee Cavallucci	Kabang Tennessee Choir Director	Revelation Kabang Choir Director	Kabang Tennessee Vitiatie	Tennessee Cavallucci Kabang
8	Pure Sensation Sandy'z Slew Great Minds	Great Minds Pure Sensation Stormy Rocit	Sandy'z Slew Brickyard Kitten Tripski	Sandy'z Slew Night Officer Brickyard Kitten	Pure Sensation Stormy Rocit Great Minds
9	Cousin Stephen Touchofstarquality Catholic Cowboy	Catholic Cowboy Matterhorn Cousin Stephen	Catholic Cowboy Cousin Stephen Touchofstarquality	Our Caravan Touchofstarquality Catholic Cowboy	Touchofstarquality Our Caravan Cousin Stephen
10	Hardcore Sweet Fortune Diva Express	She Hung The Moon May Flowers Hardcore	Hardcore May Flowers Sweet Fortune	May Flowers Diva Express Nimble Foot	Hardcore Nimble Foot Diva Express
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Tod Marks

Moonlight Song exits the winner's circle with a stakes triumph in the John Morrissey.

Sweet Tune

Veteran Moonlight Song blazes to front-end score for Fried, Baker

BY TOM LAW

JOHN MORRISSEY RECAP

Sweat poured off Charlton Baker's head and down his face, saturating his dress shirt and sports coat. Even more flowed off the powerful, almost black, frame of Moonlight Song.

They were hot. Everybody was hot. From the inside out and the outside in after humidity met a thunderstorm only to meet humidity again Thursday at Saratoga Race Course.

Thankfully Moonlight Song wasn't warmed up in the paddock like he was before a 2013 race at Saratoga or cooked by a hot pace that could have easily developed minutes earlier in the \$98,000 John Morrissey Stakes. An easy lead on a track the 8-year-old gelding likes on a sloppy surface he absolutely adores paved the way for

Moonlight Song's victory in the first of a dozen New York-bred stakes at the meeting.

Moonlight Song won the 6 1/2-furlong Morrissey gate-to-wire by 1 1/4 lengths over the hard-charging John's Island with multiple Grade 1 winner Palace third after a horrendous start. The victory was Moonlight Song's second in four starts at Saratoga and his sixth in seven tries on a wet track.

"He's an old man, so I like to see him still win at this level," said Baker, who trains the homebred gelding for Albert Fried Jr. "There's a lot of young shooters out there. It's great to see him still competing."

See **MORRISSEY** page 16 ►



9 AWARD-WINNING PERFORMANCES!

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Morrissey —

■ Continued from page 18

Moonlight Song hadn't been out since winning one of the state-bred male sprint division's key races, the Hudson Handicap on the Empire Showcase card in October at Belmont. Baker and Fried opted to give the gelding some time off after that race, which was his fourth of 2014 and bring him back for his 8-year-old season.

Baker started Moonlight Song in mid-January at Belmont Park, but like other times during the gelding's career he was forced to stop when troublesome foot issues popped up.

"We had a couple setbacks with his feet, a couple abscesses, but we never pushed on him," Baker said. "We stopped on him when we needed to stop on him, came along slowly. Thankfully the owner doesn't put any pressure on me, so that's great. That's the biggest thing."

Moonlight Song also didn't get any pressure during the Morrissey, a race where he finished fifth last year after losing a shoe early. Three factors led to that lack of pressure – Moonlight Song breaking well and showing

speed early for jockey Jose Ortiz, the race-day scratch of defending Morrissey winner Weekend Hideaway and a terrible start that left Palace about 2 lengths behind the field at the break.

Ortiz, who won the Grade 2 Honorable Miss on La Verdad Wednesday afternoon on the front end, employed similar tactics in the slop Thursday aboard Moonlight Song. They cruised without any pressure through the opening quarter in a quick :22.03 and were 2 lengths clear after a half in :45.20.

Readthebyline and Smooth Bert were closest to the leader early and the latter started to make progress around the turn until he pulled up at the 3/8ths pole. Palace also made a steady run to get into contention after that bad start and last year's Alfred G. Vanderbilt and Forego winner looked like he'd be second until John's Island rallied in deep stretch.

The win was Moonlight Song's eighth from 17 career starts. Out of the Capote mare Moonlightandbeauty, Moonlight Song didn't make it to the races until January of his 5-year-old season after several niggling injuries, including those pesky foot abscesses, slowed him down early.

"He hasn't run that much but he's

See **MORRISSEY** page 19 ►



Dave Harmon

Moonlight Song stays well clear of the rest at the finish of the Morrissey.

Morrissey —

■ Continued from page 18

terrific,” said Fried, who celebrated with his daughter Christina Elaine Fried and Jenny Carpenter, who manages his farm in Rhinebeck, N.Y. “Charlie’s done a great job with him. I’m glad I kept my box here at Saratoga.”

Moonlight Song picked up \$60,000 for the victory to boost his career bankroll to \$474,294, more than double the amount earned by his stakes-winning mare who was also bred and raced by Fried. He still owns the mare and she’s also the dam of graded stakes winner Giant Moon, two-time winner and \$144,829-earner Piscesbymoonlight and the winner Giantinthemoonlight who is entered in races Saturday and Sunday. Apollo Eleven, a 3-year-old by Medaglia d’Oro out of the mare, is also entered Sunday at Saratoga.

“Yes, we still have the mare. She’s been great for us,” Fried said.

Saratoga Leaders

TRAINERS 1ST

Todd Pletcher	8
Bill Mott	6
Chad Brown	4
Christophe Clement.....	2
Bobby Dibona	2
Jeremiah Englehart	2
Barclay Tagg.....	2
Shug McGaughey.....	2
George Weaver.....	2

JOCKEYS 1ST

John Velazquez	13
Jose Ortiz.....	8
Luis Saez.....	6
Irado Ortiz Jr.	5
Junior Alvarado.....	5
Jose Lezcano	5
Javier Castellano	4
Shaun Bridgmohan	2
Manuel Franco	2
Paco Lopez	2
Kendrick Carmouche.....	2

Through Thursday



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Pride and Joy

Moondance Joy goes
back-to-back
in off-the-turf sprint

Moondance Joy needed most of the stretch to run down the field but did it to win Thursday's seventh race and set off a big celebration from West Point Thoroughbreds and St. Elias Stable in the Saratoga Race Course winner's circle.

"I said 'hit the board baby, hit the board,' " said an excited Terry Finley, president of West Point Thoroughbreds.

Moondance Joy did much more than that.

See **THURSDAY** page 21 ►



Dave Harmon

Moondance Joy motors to the finish in Thursday's seventh race for West Point Thoroughbreds and Tom Albertrani.

SUNRISE STALLIONS SHEETS

PICK OF THE DAY

BIG BROWN › FROST GIANT › HEAVY BREATHING

WHAT THE FROST

5YO Mare by Frost Giant

Friday, Race 3

Gumpster Stables, Owner

Andrew Cohen, Breeder

Patricia Farro, Trainer

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Thursday —

■ Continued from page 20

The 3-year-old daughter of Catenius made it two straight wins after needing 10 starts to break her maiden June 17 on a yielding turf course at Belmont Park. She won Thursday for a \$40,000 claiming tag in the 5 1/2-furlong race originally scheduled for the turf but moved to the main track after heavy rain forced all the grass races to the sloppy track.

“Off-the-turf gave her a little bit of an advantage over the others,” winning trainer Tom Albertrani said.

Moondance Joy ran in the slop twice before Thursday’s come-from-behind performance, finishing third and fourth in maiden special weight races last fall at Belmont.

“She’s a filly that’s getting stronger,” Finley said. “I thought the race was going to set up really well with all that speed and in my mind it worked out exactly the way it did on the track.”

— **Billy Blake**

• Thursday was another day at the office for John Velazquez.

The 43-year-old is the leading rider at Saratoga through the first six days with 13 victories, five ahead of Jose Ortiz. Velazquez teamed with trainer Todd Pletcher to win twice Thursday and was also declared the winner in

the ninth race when Fresh Feline drifted out into his mount Sabbatical.

The stretch run had some similarities to Sunday’s Grade 1 Coaching Club American Oaks when I’m A Chatterbox and Florent Geroux bore into Curalina and Velazquez, but the two races also weren’t exactly splitting images either.

“The horse (Fresh Feline) kept coming out, out, out,” Velazquez said. “The difference this time was we were head-to-head going to the sixteenth pole and we made contact.”

Fresh Feline hit the wire first by a neck, but the stewards reversed the order after an inquiry and an objection lodged by Velazquez. Sabbatical improved to 3-for-10 for Shug McGaughey and Phipps Stable with the victory.

“I had no idea how she would do on this track,” McGaughey said of the muddy conditions. “She’s a grinder and I’m glad to see her win.”

— **Billy Blake**

• Two first-time winners crossed the wire in the eighth race as apprentice jockey Eric Cancel rode his first Saratoga winner and Fast Retailing broke her maiden in the 1 1/8-mile race for fillies and mares.

“Wow, it feels really great,” Cancel said. “I’ve been riding really hard trying for it. Thanks to the trainer. He gave me the opportunity to ride the

See **THURSDAY** page 22 ▶



Dave Harmon

Fresh Feline (right) beats Sabbatical to the finish of the ninth, but the order was reversed by the stewards due to interference.

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Thursday —

■ Continued from page 21

horse. I had to ride hard for that one. (When) I rode the horse the first time ... she came from the back, so this time I just kept her a little bit closer and we came out with a win.”

Andrew Rosen's and Edward Easton's 3-year-old daughter of Malibu Moon, a \$1 million purchase at the 2013 Keeneland September yearling sale, won by 2 ½ lengths at 13-1.

“He rode a great race on her today,” winning trainer Shug McGaughey said. “I told him to be patient and she just grinded it out. She showed up a little bit the last time and finished third. She's been training pretty well. This is what she wants to do. This is the first time around two turns. Hopefully she'll keep improving.”

Cancel also hopes to continue to improve and ride more winners at Saratoga before the meet is finished.

“I know it's going to be really tough, but I've just got to keep working hard for it,” he said.

— Annise Montplaisir



Dave Harmon

Fast Retailing keeps a sharp eye on the finish line while breaking her maiden in Thursday's eighth, the first of two consecutive wins for trainer Shug McGaughey.

• Sudden Surprise, a 2-year-old colt produced by a sire and dam that were trained by Todd Pletcher and owned by Mike Repole, won for those same connections in the third race.

By Giant Surprise and out of Ready And Good, by More Than Ready, Sudden Surprise was the first of two Pletcher 2-year-old maidens to

win Thursday. Sudden Surprise is also the first winner for Giant Surprise, a son of Giant's Causeway who stands for Repole at Rockridge Stud in Hudson, N.Y.

“Mike's got a handful of these Giant Surprises and they've all been training pretty well,” Pletcher said. “But I told him this horse is the most

physically similar (to his sire). Looks just like him.”

Sudden Surprise won the 5 ½-furlong race for state-breds by 2 ½ lengths over second-time starter Fish Trappe Road.

“He's trained pretty well, we learned a few things about him his last couple breezes,” Pletcher said. “Seems like he's a speed horse, wants to kind of run freely. When it came up sloppy especially, we just wanted to make sure he got away alertly and utilize his speed.”

Pletcher's other first-out winner was Island Saint in the fifth race, also at 5 ½ furlongs on the main track after it was moved off the turf.

Siena Farm's homebred daughter of Speightstown won by 2 ¾ lengths over True Pleasure under John Velazquez.

— Annise Montplaisir

• Thursday's steeplechase opener, the \$75,000 Jonathan Kiser novice stakes was postponed due to a storm at paddock time.

The race was redrawn with the same seven runners and will be the first race (of 10) Monday with a 1 p.m. post.

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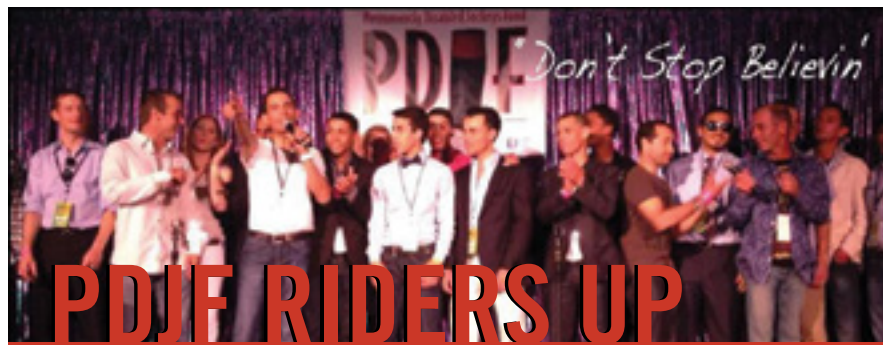
HANDICAPING THE HANDICAPPERS

Resident human handicapper The Koz chimed in with his opinion of The Special's Power Grid handicapping board. Longshot Chad Summers is off to a quick start and an early lead, but it's a long meet.

Handicapper	ML	Comment
John Shapazian	6-5	Might bounce but might go gate to wire
Tom Law	5-2	Sharp last out
Gaile Fitzgerald	4-1	Won two back – one to watch
Charles Bedard	15-1	Handicaps for a price – must be close early
Chad Summers	15-1	Plays the angles

ANALYSIS

Chad Summers may make it to the winner's circle this year, always on top of the angles and the meet sets up nicely for a big upset. **Gaile Fitzgerald** won two back and will be in the thick of it. **Tom Law** was consistent last year and always a major threat, big factor. Nobody works harder at picking winners than **John Shapazian** but he might be a big bounce off a top performance last year. They announced no show betting because of John, who easily could win with a repeat performance. A good play for a big price would be **Charles Bedard** for place, handicaps with good solid angles and it sounds like a very regal pronunciation at the window, "Bedard, that's two D's, well actually not together, to place...please."



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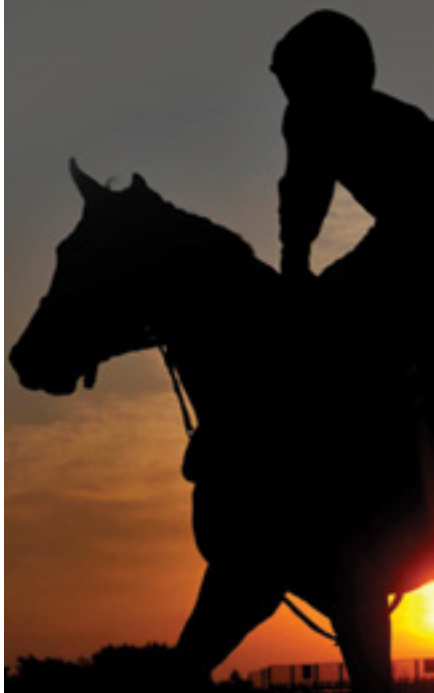
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SARATOGA RESULTS

Thursday July 30.

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SECOND \$32,000, CLAIMING \$16,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 1 1/8M

5	Stolen Victory	J. Castellano	\$12.80	\$6.40	\$3.30
6	Pushme Pullyou	A. Cruz		\$8.30	\$4.10
1	Harlans Belle	S. Bridgmohan			\$2.30

Ch Filly 2012, by Eskendereya - Stolen Humor by Distorted Humor
Owner: Winning Move Stable, McConnell Racing Stable, Green, VIP Stable and Mullins. Trainer: Gary Contessa.

Breeder: Bortolazzo Stable LLC (NY).

Claimed: Harlans Belle claimed by Giorgi Stable for \$16,000

Time: 1:55.70

Exacta (5-6), \$103.00; Quinella (5-6), \$48.40; Superfecta (5-6-1-3), \$1,101.00; Trifecta (5-6-1), \$205.00

THIRD \$73,000, NY-BRED MAIDEN SPECIAL WEIGHT, 2 YO, 5 1/2F

7	Sudden Surprise	J. Velazquez	\$11.80	\$7.10	\$5.40
3	Fish Trappe Road	L. Saez		\$4.60	\$3.80
2	Ordinaire	J. Alvarado			\$10.40

B Colt 2013, by Giant Surprise - Ready and Good by More Than Ready
Owner: Repole Stable. Trainer: Todd Pletcher.

Breeder: Repole Stables LLC (NY).

Time: 1:05.14

Daily Double (5-7), \$111.00; Exacta (7-3), \$55.00; Superfecta (7-3-2-8), \$3,369.00; Trifecta (7-3-2), \$789.00

FOURTH \$100,000, NY-BRED STAKES - JOHN MORRISSEY S., 3 YO'S & UP, 6 1/2F

7	Moonlight Song	J. Ortiz	\$6.80	\$4.30	\$3.00
2	John's Island	A. Arroyo		\$8.10	\$3.80
4	Palace	C. Velasquez			\$2.30

Dk B/ Br Gelding 2007, by Unbridled's Song - Moonlightandbeauty by Capote

Owner: Fried, Jr., Albert. Trainer: Charlton Baker.

Breeder: Albert Fried Jr. (NY).

Late Scratches: Ostrolenka, Weekend Hideaway

Time: 1:17.69

Daily Double (7-7), \$53.50; Exacta (7-2), \$57.00; Quinella (2-7), \$34.20; Superfecta (7-2-4-8), \$358.00; Trifecta (7-2-4), \$150.50; Pic 3 (5-7-7), \$415.50

FIFTH \$111,600, MAIDEN SPECIAL WEIGHT, 2 YO, 5 1/2F

13	Island Saint	J. Velazquez	\$5.00	\$3.40	\$2.70
14	True Pleasure	J. Lezcano		\$11.00	\$8.10
7	La Nina	T. McCarthy			\$3.90

Ch Filly 2013, by Speightstown - Prospective Saint by Saint Ballado

Owner: Siena Farm LLC. Trainer: Todd Pletcher.

Breeder: Siena Farms LLC (KY).

Late Scratches: Gem, Double Dose, Kentucky Road, Country Muse, Big Thrill, Conquest Sarahstar

Time: 1:05.87

Daily Double (7-13), \$19.00; Exacta (13-14), \$49.20; Superfecta (13-14-7-1), \$5,848.00; Trifecta (13-14-7), \$432.00; Pic 3 (7-7-13), \$229.00

SIXTH \$67,000, CLAIMING \$50,000, 3 YO, 1 1/8M

4	Jules N Rome	J. Ortiz	\$6.10	\$3.60	\$2.30
7	La Inesperada	E. Cancel		\$6.40	\$2.80
3	Arctic Ocean	R. Hernandez			\$2.40

Gr/ro Filly 2012, by Dunkirk - Pretty Honoree by Double Honor

Owner: MeB Racing Stables LLC and Brooklyn Boyz Stables.

Trainer: Dominick Schettino.

Breeder: Harry L. Landry, Constanica Farm & Dunkirk Syndicate (NY).

Late Scratches: Right On Kitten, Rock Me Again, Wealth Creation

Time: 1:53.91

Daily Double (13-4), \$15.00; Exacta (4-7), \$37.40; Superfecta (4-7-3-2), \$142.40; Trifecta (4-7-3), \$89.50; Pic 3 (7-13-4), \$58.00; Pic 4 (7-7-4/5/6/9/11/12/13-1/4/5/8), \$419.00; Pic 5 (5-7-7-4/5/6/9/11/12/13-1/4/5/8), \$1,939.00

SEVENTH \$56,400, CLAIMING \$40,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 5 1/2F

3	Moondance Joy	L. Saez	\$46.60	\$18.40	\$6.30
13	Rachel's Temper	K. Carmouche		\$9.70	\$5.10
11	Cool Comfort	R. Hernandez			\$3.70

Ch Filly 2012, by Catienus - Sydney's Lexington by Outofthebox

Owner: St. Elias Stable and West Point Thoroughbreds.

Trainer: Thomas Albertrani.

Breeder: McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds, LLC (NY).

Late Scratches: Henry's Song, Justlookatmenow, Songbook, On a Star

Claimed: Comet Sixty Two claimed by Dubb, Michael for \$40,000

Time: 1:05.82

Daily Double (4-3), \$144.00; Exacta (3-13), \$481.00; Superfecta (3-13-11-6), \$15,274.00; Trifecta (3-13-11), \$3,394.00; Pic 3 (13-4-3), \$371.00

EIGHTH \$83,000, MAIDEN SPECIAL WEIGHT, 3 YO'S & UP, 1 1/8M

1	Fast Retailing	E. Cancel	\$28.00	\$9.80	\$4.90
2	Regia Marina	J. Castellano		\$3.50	\$2.60
7	Miss Hollywood	P. Lopez			\$3.50

B Filly 2012, by Malibu Moon - Shop Again by Wild Again

Owner: Rosen, Andrew and Easton, Edward.

Trainer: Claude McGaughey III. Breeder: Jamm, Ltd. (KY).

Time: 1:52.91

Daily Double (3-1), \$576.00; Exacta (1-2), \$79.50; Superfecta (1-2-7-6), \$3,336.00; Trifecta (1-2-7), \$478.50; Pic 3 (4-3-1), \$1,553.00

NINTH \$90,000, AOC \$62,500, 3 YO'S & UP, 1 1/8M

2	Sabbatical	J. Velazquez	\$7.10	\$3.20	\$2.30
4	(dq)Fresh Feline	J. Alvarado		\$3.10	\$2.40
7	Lady of Gold	T. McCarthy			\$2.30

B Filly 2011, by Medaglia d'Oro - Daydreaming by A.P. Indy

Owner: Phipps Stable. Trainer: Claude McGaughey III.

Breeder: Phipps Stable (KY).

Late Scratches: Bugle, Regardez (GB), Chocolatier (FR), Graceful Grit (IRE), Radiator (GB)

Time: 1:52.85

Daily Double (1-2), \$71.00; Exacta (2-4), \$20.20; Superfecta (2-4-7-8), \$157.40; Trifecta (2-4-7), \$34.00; Pic 3 (3-1-2), \$2,453.00; Place Pix Nine (3/4/7-3/11/13-1/2/7-2), \$43.80

TENTH \$39,000, NY-BRED MAIDEN CLAIMING \$25,000, 3 & UP, 6F

10	Winter Wish	L. Saez	\$5.50	\$3.20	\$2.90
9	She's All Even	J. Castellano		\$4.50	\$3.90
11	Offlee Good	C. Lanerie			\$6.10

Ch Mare 2010, by Frost Giant - Cameo Mio by Belong to Me

Owner: Jim and Susan Hill. Trainer: George Weaver.

Breeder: Cedar Ridge Farm LLC (NY).

Late Scratches: Devil's Silent, Hint of Sarcasm, Go Babe

Claimed: Winter Wish claimed by WAJA Racing Stable for \$25,000

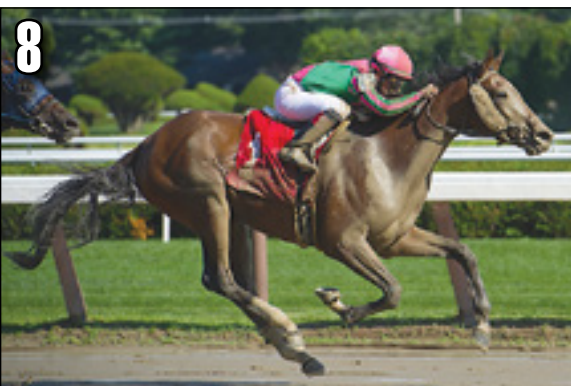
Time: 1:11.64

Daily Double (2-10), \$28.20; Exacta (10-9), \$21.60; Superfecta (10-9-11-3), \$293.00; Trifecta (10-9-11), \$109.00; Pic 3 (1-2-10), \$343.00; Pic 4 (3-1-2-10), \$8,725.00; Pic 6 (4/5/6/9/11/12/13-1/4/5-3-1-2-1), \$924.00

On Track Handle: 2,092,285

Inter-State Handle: 6,758,930

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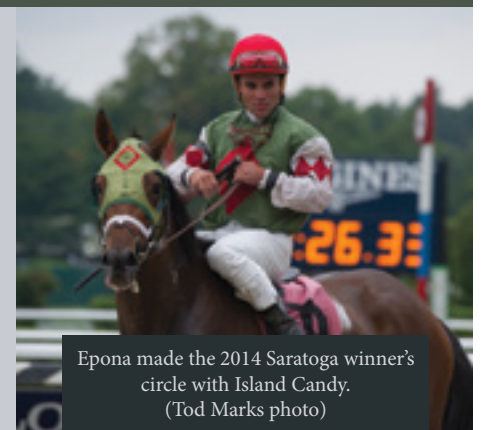
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Epona made the 2014 Saratoga winner's circle with Island Candy.
(Tod Marks photo)

What's new in 2015? Plenty

BY ASHLEY DINGEMAN

It's hard to believe how quickly time has passed since the 2014 Saratoga racing season. But here we are again, and with a new year comes many, many new places to see in the small city that seems to rarely sleep. Whether you're visiting for the summer or you're a Saratoga local, let's take a moment to run through all that's new to Saratoga since last year's racing season.

Last year, 15 Church was the hottest new restaurant in Saratoga for fine dining. Well, that hasn't changed much, especially with their expansion/addition of a gorgeous and spacious outdoor dining area. Offering a slightly more casual menu, the 15 Church Patio is privately located right at 15 Church Street, attached to the enclosed restaurant. Just look for the purple building, and you're bound to have one of the best meals of your life.

Filling the Congress Plaza lot with a beautiful hotel was one thing, but attaching a beautiful restaurant with great drink specials and a reasonably priced menu was even greater. Visiting town and looking for a place to stay? Enjoy being treated like a king (or a queen), at the Embassy Suites Hotel. And if you are in town on business and you're

starting to get hungry, don't hesitate to dine or bring guests to their attached restaurant, Diamond Club Grill.

Across Congress Plaza you will find Three Vines, open since October, 2014. Specializing in meatballs and then some, Three Vines is owned by three Italian brothers, all bringing their own unique skills into the restaurant, and providing a great experience each and every time you dine here. A great wine list, a comfortable and somewhat casual atmosphere, and a great place to bring the whole family.

"So far our locals have really kept us busy and happy. We see the same faces from the community a lot in here, but now we hope to turn vacationers on to great food and great atmosphere here at Three Vines," said general manager Irene Koerner. "We have a live jazz musician who brings in a large crowd and a great happy hour, seven days a week."

If you feel like venturing a little outside of downtown, Carson's Woodside Tavern, located at 57 RT-9P in Malta, recently took over the building where Cliff's once resided. With an updated interior and a new deck with a view of Saratoga Lake, Carson's has quickly become a popular spot for anyone who

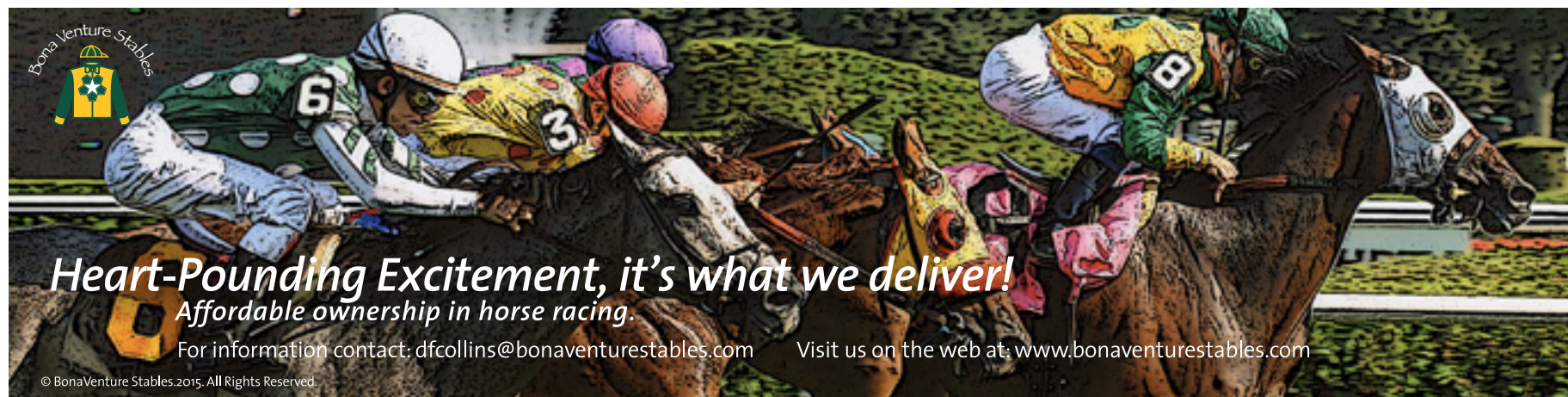
enjoys good food, overlooking the lake, and getting out of downtown Saratoga.

Another new, out of town option is Bravo. Located at 3246 South Broadway, Bravo is a new American seafood and steakhouse. It opened in May and has taken Saratoga by storm ever since. Specializing in upscale seafood and steak, you can bet on having a great meal at Bravo after a long day at the races.

"We're a New York style steakhouse with an Italian hint to it," said manager David Leschen. "We have gone out of our way to provide the absolute best, choice Angus beef available, while still keeping the prices reasonable. Our building, previously where Joe Collins Restaurant was for 37 years, is very historic in nature. We're now trying to bring back the popularity they had for many years, and recreate a place for customers to go for a great meal after a day at the races."

Moving back to downtown Saratoga, you might remember the hot dog hole in the wall that sat on Phila Street last summer, but the small restaurant is singing a new tune this year. The Falafel Den, located at 6 Phila Street, is the only restaurant in Saratoga

See **WHAT'S NEW?** page 27 ►



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What's New? —

■ Continued from page 26

ga exclusively centered on falafel. The traditional Mediterranean food is a great alternative for those looking to eat lighter and healthier, and you can get a complete lunch for around \$5.

Speaking of “faster food,” there’s a new pizza place in town, and they are not messing around. Gennaro’s Pizza at 46 Marion Ave in the Fresh Market Plaza may be new, but they’re cranking out pizzas like they’ve been doing it for decades. If you’re into a thin, crispy crust with fresh and authentic ingredients, this pizza place is a must for all of your pizza desires.

Right next door to Gennaro’s is the fast-casual burger chain Smashburger. With a line out the door on many weeknights, Smashburger’s claim to fame is their freshly smashed burger to order. Consider it a step above the rest.

Love to get yourself a sweet yet somewhat guilt-free treat? Well Menchie’s Frozen Yogurt might be able to fill that void now that it’s officially open at 3076 Route 50 in the TJ Maxx Plaza at exit 15. With plenty of flavors to choose from and even more toppings, this is a perfect place to bring family members of all ages to end your day on a high note, sugar high that is.

Is the bar scene more your thing? Saratoga has new additions there as well. First up is the Spa City Tap and Barrel. Saratoga’s newest bar on Caroline Street, the Spa City Tap and Barrel houses 32 beers on tap at all times, and is great for having a fun night on the town. With a section dedicated to games, darts and pool tables, this new bar is competing for the top hang out spot in Saratoga.

Right across the street, The Reserve is Saratoga’s party spot for those who love to dance. When you walk down the stairs, prepare to be mesmerized by the futuristic dance floor and many lounge areas. With bottle service offered and a resident DJ, you’ll never want the night to end once you enter through the doors.

As always, Saratoga is bustling with new places to visit and different cuisines to try. Take your pick between any of the restaurants, new or old in this small but vibrant city, and you’re bound to be impressed either way.



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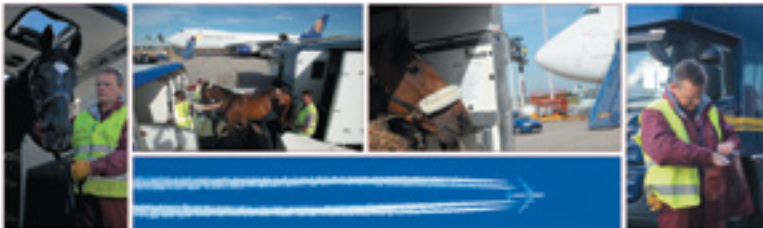


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College sports coaches deal with this sort of thing all the time. The door's always revolving, players are constantly coming and going. Some coaches, like Kentucky's John Calipari, deal with it on an annual basis. They call what he's perfected "one and done" around the country and it works pretty well for Cal in the Bluegrass.

We've got a bit of a revolving door here at The Saratoga Special.

Interns and graphic designers come and go. We've had four, if you count one that came for a week as a fill-in last summer, graphic designers in the three years I've been around. What about writers? We've had way more than that, too many to count as I bang out this column with the sun below the horizon and shadows getting long on Spring Street.

None of this is new mind you, or at least that's what Joe and Sean tell me. They've seen them come and go now for 15 years, the lifespan of The Special.

None of the writers from my first season in 2013 are around anymore. Most are off with real jobs or back at school. They text, email and tweet every now and then, telling us how they miss the good old days of assignments, deadlines, cold pizza, the downtown office in the Roohan Building.

Only one is back from last year, and we're lucky to have him since his primary job here in Saratoga is for The Jockey Club. Gabby, Ryan, another Ryan, Catlyn, Dan M., Rebecca, Kristin, Katie, Ashley and Jackie, all gone.

What's the saying, out with the old and in with the new? We've got a new crew at The Special, five "rookies" and one "veteran." Here's our team:

Annis Montplaisir, 19, showed up two weeks ago ready to roll after a more than 1,500-mile trip from Moorhead, Minn. We call her "Fargo" because she goes to North Dakota State University in Fargo, because she's got the accent and it seems more interesting to say she's from North Dakota versus Minnesota. She's on the hunt seat equestrian team at NDSU and loves to travel – obviously. Annis interned last spring with the American Quarter Horse Association in Amarillo, Texas, and her internship with The Special goes alongside other jobs as volunteer "racetrack ambassador," pony rider, gallop girl, clocker, media relations intern at Canterbury Park and director of communications at the North Dakota Horse Park.

Billy Blake, 24, earned the nickname "Billy Blaze" at a pre-meet cookout. Born in Philadelphia


and raised in Albany, he started coming to Saratoga as a baby and "got hooked on horse racing." He graduated from SUNY Oneonta and we hear he plays some golf, something that doesn't come in real handy for the month and a half of Saratoga. He'll be one-and-done for us since he was hired by The Stronach Group to start work out at Santa Anita Park in September. Oh and get this, he qualified for the National Handicapping Contest last year. Yes, that handicapping contest; the one in Las Vegas.

Brandon Valvo, 21, grew up near Saratoga but never actually went to the track as a child. He lived just a few minutes away from the Saratoga County Airport and his mother took him to see the private planes owners would land there to come to the races "so I had an underlying interest in racing and horse ownership." He finally went to the races with a family friend five years ago – to Saratoga Raceway for harness racing – and rarely misses a weekend. A student at Siena College majoring in accounting, Brandon writes, edits and handles social media for the Harness Racing America website. He won one of the \$1,000 scholarships handed out Wednesday during the seventh annual College Day presented by Toyota.

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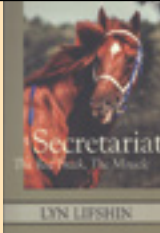
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Crew —

Continued from page 28

Teresa Genaro, 50, is a turf writer born in Yonkers, raised in Saratoga Springs and currently living in Brooklyn. She teaches English at the Packer Collegiate Institute in Brooklyn and serves on the board of the Belmont Child Care Association. Like many who grew up in Saratoga, Teresa's interest in racing came from early exposure and her family's interests in the game. Her parents owned Standardbred horses, which she says brought them all to Saratoga, and her mother worked at the National Museum of Racing for nearly a decade. We hear she likes setting records on her Fitbit, which also happens to be a passion of Annise, so perhaps a challenge looms before the end of the meet.

Dan Tordjman, 32, is our lone returnee after pitching in last year while he juggled his responsibilities as a brand ambassador with The Jockey Club initiative America's Best Racing. He worked in television for 10 years before he hung it up for a career in racing. He's the Maryland correspondent for Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred — a publication our team at ST Publishing edits and writes year round — and he's all in on the game. He launched his website danonymousracing.com in 2013 to share racing stories, handicapping advice and personal race analysis and selections. He's also proud the site's fundraising, with collections from fans topping \$15,000 for OTTB charities and the PDJE.

Kaitlyn Vishneowski, 22, continues our pipeline of graphic artists from SUNY Oneonta, following Katie Lasak last year. Kaitlyn is headed to Manhattan once the meet ends to pursue her career in design, but first she'll deal with our crew, work on advertising, paginate and anything that Joe pushes her way and that Sean and I have absolutely no clue how to do. She stopped by Druthers for a bite to eat one day last week and came back with one of best looking burgers we'd seen in a while, so we know she's got good taste.

Apologies for repeating some from the closing paragraph of a similar column last year, but it fits this year.

There you have it, our team for The Saratoga Special 2015. They've got friends they'll bring to the races and tell about the greatest game played outside. Be nice, they're our and your future.



Join us for an evening of fine dining, specialty cocktails and an auction of stallion seasons and unique experiences featuring Food Network star Anne Burrell.

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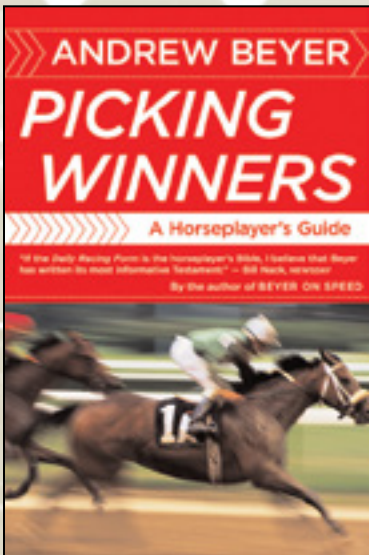
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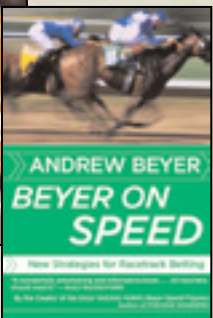
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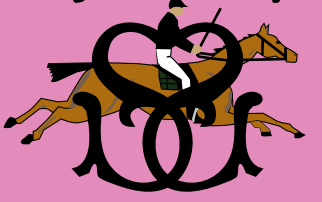



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“Don’t be a maybe, be a definite. You can write a column about the 5-mile trail!”

Tom Law – The Special’s Quenton Cassidy – forces me to find my running shoes Monday morning. They hadn’t been used for months. Yes, months.

Tom, Joe and Nolan Clancy show up at my door. I have nowhere to hide. We hop in Tom’s Mazda and drive to SPAC in search of the 5-mile trail.

And we’re off.

Tom breaks sharply, elbows high, striding out, Frankie Brothers would write, “Hits the ground hard” on his catalogue page. Joe stalks, Nolan tracks, all legs and arms – 36 years apart but built the same, like they were spit out of a frozen custard machine. I take a deep breath, early, knowing I’m in the wrong race, the wrong day.

Across the lawn, into the woods, at least we have shade. I navigate over roots and around rocks, wondering if it would be less pain if I sprain my ankle now and call it a day. The shade feels good.

Following yellow markers tacked to trees, we go straight through the woods, then turn left, go downhill, whew that feels good, then along the creek, way down below. Nothing like running downhill, but nothing like knowing that everything that goes down, must come up. We cross a bridge, over a creek and make a right. Tom, Joe and Nolan banter about the footing. I’m already feeling it.

Hikers and strollers step aside as we pass on the left, through a spring, the water rolling off a sand-colored rock (which they later tell me is a giant mineral deposit), it feels like we’re in a sand mine. The water splashes from Joe’s feet onto my shins, my shoes feel damp. Nolan grunts and skips left, then right, then left, then right. I know to conserve. Tom says something about steps. I think he’s kidding. I hope he’s kidding. He’s not kidding. Steps on a run. What kind of trail has steps?

We start up the wooden steps. I try two at a time,



that’s not working. I try one at a time, worse. Nolan skips up them like he’s chasing his first love. We’ve gone a mile, maybe. I spit. Pull off my hat, wipe my forehead, tuck the hat in my shorts, my glasses fog up, I push them onto my head. At the top of the stairs, I shudder. This is pathetic. Tom says you never feel quite the same after those steps. I didn’t feel quite the same before the steps.

We come out of the woods, across a grass meadow, making a path, I think of Janet Elliot’s sign at her farm, “Do not make a path.” No one has read it here. We’ve gone a mile, maybe two. I stare at Joe’s feet, knowing I’m cutting my stride but knowing I need something to mesmerize me. Tom shouts directions at each switchback, “left” and we turn left, “right” and we turn right. I’m lagging in last. I don’t want them to see me weak. We run downhill toward a pool. I hear kids screaming, laughing, they’re having more fun than I am as we angle right, around the pool and back into the woods. I shouldn’t have eaten that bowl of cereal this morning.

Through another meadow, back into the woods, left, right, switchback, I spit. I catch myself, breathing too fast, I slow it down, take the best deep breath I can muster. Nobody asks me how I’m doing. I hear conversation, bits and pieces. I can’t say anything.

Tom slows, makes a right, stops. We look out over a wooden pier, built by an Eagle Scout. Reeds shoot up from the water, algae and lily pads scatter across the surface like a bowl of vegetable soup across a counter. Nolan’s smiling. Joe and Tom are winded, but comfortable. I’m gritting my teeth, trying to stretch, wishing for the 3-mile trail.

Off we go. Tom, elbows high, he’s like a steeplechase horse. Nolan jaunts, like a skipping stone across a lake. Joe takes one stride for every two of mine. We cross back through the woods, out of the woods, across a wooden bridge, our feet thwacking like somebody cleaning car mats. Then Tom says it, “Sorry, buddy, one more hill.”

I take a deep breath and we climb. It feels like Everest. I think about galloping horses for Mike Hushion at Saratoga, I think about Bill Punk telling me he got some of his best thinking done while running, I think about how I used to feel when I ran. We climb.

By the top, the boys turn left out of sight, I walk. It wasn’t a decision, I just drift to a walk. I turn the corner, back in sight, I run. More like a waddle. I turn left at the yellow sign, back in the woods. Then across the road, I hope nobody I know is watching, I’m a 100 yards – it feels like 100 miles – behind the team. Tom said, “No man left behind” when we started. I have been left behind. I see a parking lot, it’s got to be ours, the boys glide across the marble facade of a long building. I bet it’s a beautiful building, but I can’t see.

They stop. I see them stop. Thank God, they’ve stopped. I slog the last furlong. I stop. I feel pain. And a column.



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