

Year 23 • No. 13

Wednesday, August 9, 2023

*The* Saratoga

# Special

Saratoga's Race Newspaper since 2001

## Kid Stuff

**Curlin-Beholder colt brings \$4 million  
as Fasig-Tipton closes banner Select Sale**

**Mark Hennig Stable Tour**

**Venti Valentine eyes  
Wednesday feature**

**Hall of Fame Stakes  
returns on Friday**





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Dom Napolitano/NYRA Photo

# Here&There...in Saratoga

## By The Numbers

**1:** Bicycle stolen (OK, maybe just taken) from The Special's office Saturday night. Older Trek, weird frame and suspension, red-ish color, Henry Street Taproom and Saratoga Special stickers on the frame. We'd love to have it back. No questions asked. Reward. Thank you.

**1:** Hall of Fame jockey helping to fill the tank of a golf cart Tuesday morning on the Oklahoma.

**250:** Fish caught by Nicholas Brown last summer, give or take. We hear the numbers are down quite a bit this season.

**576:** Number of horses entered in the Thoroughbred Makeover. As of Aug. 1.

**4,194:** Yearlings cataloged for the 80th Keeneland September sale set for Sept. 11-23.

## Worth Repeating

"It's good. They give you radishes. If they don't give me radishes on a taco it's an automatic D-minus."

**Hotwalker John Wayne Eastwood on the taco stand near the Rec Hall**

"It's an away game."

**Trainer Ken McPeck, training a set from the gate on the main track last week and a long way from his spot on the Oklahoma Annex**

"I have a tendency to want to tell the stories."

**Hall of Fame trainer D. Wayne Lukas**

"It's like being at the zoo. No, it's like being in the zoo."

**The Special's Joe Clancy as sales goes walked down East Avenue and looked into The Special's window Monday night**

## Names of the Day

**Play Free Bird, third race.** Susan Moulton nailed this. The 2-year-old filly is by Maximus Mischief out of Stormy Saturday. Oh, the memories of high-school dances.

**Pressure, seventh race.** It's Saratoga. Sales Week. We're all feeling it.

**Permed, first race Thursday.** Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners' 2-year-old filly is out of Curled.

**Strange Fruit, second race Thursday.** William Hebert's filly is out of Billieholidayblues.

**Truculent, fourth race Thursday.** Have you ever heard the story about baseball player/broadcaster Bob Uecker and truculent?

**Now Showing, 10th race Friday.** The 3-year-old filly is out of Giant Screen.



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# Here&There...in Saratoga

## Worth Repeating

“Tom, is there anything else you wish to put into this story?”  
*The Special's Joe Clancy to Tom Law, who wrote short (at first), at 11:59 Monday night*

“It's always going.”  
*Dr. James Hunt when asked how it was going Tuesday morning*

“Shari and I are incredibly fortunate, deeply humbled, and honored to support Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance and its mission to ensure a secure future for retired racehorses through accredited aftercare.”  
*James Ough after he and his wife Shari donated \$25,000 to the TAA*

“Always wanted to train. I briefly wanted to be a jumps jockey. Then I grew up and joined the real world.”  
*French-based trainer Tim Donworth*

“I could play any sport there is, but I was like this big. I could go hit a 90 mile an hour fastball, left and right-handed, but in those days, they weren't taking anybody who weighed 120 pounds. It wasn't going to happen.”  
*Hall of Fame jockey Corey Nakatani about an era long before Altuve*

“You have more staff here. You have one hosing the horse, one washing him, one walking him. We don't have that much staff in France, it's too expensive.”  
*Assistant Jessica Jankerup about the differences between Saratoga and France*

“Ride her with confidence. Do whatever you want to do, and you know how to ride, just don't be in a speed duel early. Save something for the end.”  
*Jockey Irad Ortiz Jr. when asked about trainer John Ortiz's instructions before Brightwork won the Adirondack Sunday*

“I talked to Johnny yesterday and said, ‘Johnny I'm nervous, there's some good horses in here.’ He goes, ‘Bill, when you play poker, you don't know what the other guy's got, but you know what you got and I know what we got.’ ”  
*Owner Bill Simon about talking to trainer John Ortiz before Brightwork won the Adirondack*

“He's been training real well. It's taken a little while to get here, but we are happy to have him back.”  
*Trainer Todd Pletcher about Americanrevolution who returns in Friday's Evan Shipman*

## The Chief

The Special enjoyed a long relationship with Hall of Fame trainer Allen “The Chief” Jerkens. He filled notebooks, recorders and brains with wisdom, advice, quips, opinions, history, perspective for 15 seasons of this newspaper even if he wasn't sure what to make of us at the beginning. For years, we ran a daily quote. We'll bring one back as often as we can.

“I had this little scrapbook I made when I was 7 years old and that. It was in my old house, I don't know how I lost it. If I showed you that little scrapbook, you would laugh. When I first became a horse bug, I would put everything I could see and cut out and paste in that book, even the advertisements for the harnesses on the Sears Roebuck catalogue. The first racehorse was Omaha and I remember ripping it slightly while I was pasting it in, so then, I had to push it back in there, you could see it. It was so funny to see it later on.”

– Trainer Allen Jerkens, 1929-2015



Nolan Clancy

## QUOTE OF THE DAY

“I know my ability was always there. I was my worst critic which makes you become better. I was my worst enemy when I would talk to people. I had a hard time when I came back and somebody would say, ‘What were you doing?’ I'd tell them, ‘(screw) you, you take the reins.’ ”

*Hall of Fame jockey Corey Nakatani*



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# Here&There...in Saratoga



Dave Harmon

Risk Profile is one of six winners at the meet for Into Mischief.

## Saratoga Stallion Board

Leading stallions at the 2023 Saratoga Race Course season  
with wins, stakes wins and first-place earnings:

Stallion	Wins	Stakes Wins	1st Place Earnings
Curlin.....	6.....	2.....	\$459,800
Into Mischief.....	6.....	1.....	\$485,650
Gun Runner .....	5.....	1.....	\$328,350
Practical Joke.....	5.....	1.....	\$323,400
Justify .....	4.....	.....	\$217,250
Liam's Map.....	4.....	1.....	\$309,375
Maclean's Music.....	4.....	.....	\$210,650
Mendelssohn .....	4.....	.....	\$209,550
American Pharoah .....	3.....	.....	\$167,750
Arrogate .....	3.....	.....	\$173,250
Bustin Stones .....	3.....	.....	\$153,725
Central Banker.....	3.....	.....	\$136,950
English Channel .....	3.....	1.....	\$250,800
Kantharos .....	3.....	.....	\$141,350
Speighster .....	3.....	.....	\$157,025
Street Sense .....	3.....	.....	\$158,400
Twirling Candy .....	3.....	.....	\$184,250
Uncle Mo .....	3.....	.....	\$184,250
Army Mule.....	2.....	.....	\$46,750
Cairo Prince.....	2.....	.....	\$110,000
Connect.....	2.....	.....	\$52,250
Cupid.....	2.....	.....	\$143,550
Freud.....	2.....	1.....	\$137,500
Ghostzapper .....	2.....	.....	\$106,150
Goldencents.....	2.....	.....	\$106,150
Jimmy Creed .....	2.....	1.....	\$165,000

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Laoban .....	2.....	\$100,650
Lookin At Lucky .....	2.....	\$82,500
Lope de Vega .....	2..... 1.....	\$387,750
Medaglia d'Oro .....	2.....	\$110,000
More Than Ready.....	2.....	\$67,100
Munnings .....	2.....	\$96,250
Not This Time.....	2..... 2.....	\$247,500
Nyquist .....	2..... 2.....	\$184,250
Omaha Beach .....	2.....	\$115,500
Outwork.....	2..... 1.....	\$192,225
Speightstown.....	2.....	\$121,000
Temple City.....	2.....	\$63,250
The Factor .....	2.....	\$56,100
Tonalist.....	2.....	\$143,550
Uncaptured.....	2..... 1.....	\$140,250
Violence.....	2..... 1.....	\$320,650
Weekend Hideaway .....	2..... 1.....	\$101,750

Through Tuesday, Aug. 8



Dave Harmon

New York Thunder is one of two winners at the meet, both stakes,  
for his stallion Nyquist.



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## With Mark Hennig

It happens this time of year. The Special gets behind, trainers get busy, the sale takes up everybody's time and you wake up Tuesday morning without a Stable Tour for Wednesday. Somehow, Mark Hennig knew it.

"Don't tell me you want to do a Stable Whatever when I'm supposed to be at the sale," he said with a smile, while juggling a phone call and a set returning from the track.

Well, yeah. We do. Hennig finished the call, watched the horses get sorted and gave Joe and Nolan Clancy a half-hour plus about his first trip to Saratoga, former boss D. Wayne Lukas and the 30 horses in the stately Barns 10 and 11 in the shade of some ancient trees on the main track side between the Morning Like Kitchen and Greentree.

"I'm going to say I've been in these barns since 1994 maybe, '93," he said "That's 30 years. I don't look that old, do I? I don't look as old as that slate roof on top anyway. It's the most painted and photographed barn at Saratoga, no doubt. I had one done a few years ago – it's got (past stable stars) Raging Fever and Gold Mover in the painting. But I've seen many others, too."

Hennig, who needs four wins to reach 1,500 for his career, has won three races at the meet and entered 10 over the next three days.

Thanks Mark, let's get to it.

**Ouster:** A \$50,000 Fasig-Tipton New York-bred purchase in 2019 by Windylea Farm, the 5-year-old gelding has won three of six (with two seconds) this year while pushing his career earnings to \$275,123. Won here going 1 3/16 miles on the dirt July 16. Tuesday morning, the son of Outwork looked like a painting of a horse – fit, strong, just enough on-his-toes to and from the track. He needs a race and might get it as a main-track-only entrant in today's fourth. "If it comes off it's a mile-and-a-quarter. They canceled the steeplechase, I thought that was a good sign. They hung the race up and it would have been back in two weeks after his winning effort, so I didn't want to do that. Now it's 24 days. Every day they announce what races they're going to use, and I was like, 'If they're going to use it, I might as well stick him in.' He was at the point where he needed to breeze. If he doesn't get in, I'll breeze him. If he does, we're in good shape. I hope he gets to run."

**Clover Street:** Seidman Stable's homebred 3-year-old filly won at Aqueduct in March and was second twice at Belmont Park this spring. She tried the turf and finished seventh here July 19. "In



The photo is from 2010, but the Hennig barn hasn't changed much and is still one of the coolest spots on the backside.

retrospect, that was probably not the spot for her. It was a Stallion Series race and we went ahead and tried it. Johnny (Velazquez) rode her and thought she should shorten up and go back to the dirt. She'll be OK doing that."

**Gun Song:** A \$400,000 purchase by Lee Lewis in March, the 2-year-old daughter of Gun Runner and Grade 2 winner Nicole H is prepping for her debut, learning how to be a racehorse and dealing with everything 2-year-olds deal with at Saratoga. "She's doing well and hopefully we can run her at the end of the meet here. Nothing ever goes right here, nothing goes according to plan anyway, because that's just the way it is. With 2-year-olds it's a challenge because you're trying to incorporate gate work and everything else too and if you get bad tracks you don't want to breeze them on because of weather then you fall behind. It's been a really wet summer up here and with the 2-year-olds it feels like you're always dealing with something even if it's not the weather."

**Prophetic:** A Windylea homebred, the 2-year-old full-brother to 2020 Louisiana Derby winner Wells Bayou breezed a half-mile from the gate Aug. 6 and has appreciated his time in Saratoga. "He's going to be a late-developer. The light's kind of coming on for him. It's been good for him to come up and be around all this. At Belmont on the main track, he was just kind of going around. You kind of had to urge him to gallop around. Now, he's finding company. He likes getting in traffic. It makes him more aggressive. He's figuring it out."

**Shutters:** Five-year-old Get Stormy gelding joined the Hennig barn in April after being purchased by HGS Thoroughbreds and stretched his back while dozing along the side wall Tuesday. He was beaten a half-length when third in a turf allowance here Aug. 5, his second start for Hennig. "He ran really well, probably should

have won but got bumped by another horse who finished behind him. He's a New York-bred who gets to run for the \$150,000 pot here and should get one more chance before the end of the meet."

**Timely Conquest:** The Hall of Fame Stakes horses weren't the only ones inconvenienced by the cancelation of the final four races Aug. 4. Commonwealth Stable's 3-year-old filly was in the holding barn waiting her cue when the card was scrapped due to rain. The June debut winner returns in Friday's second race, a first-level allowance for New York-breds going 7 furlongs. "I didn't breeze. They're so ready to run that sometimes if you take them out there and want to do something easy, they end up doing too much and you blow your race. They said they were bringing the race back, so I thought we'd be OK. She's fit, she's 1-for-1, trains like she wants to be all right. She went for a little walk to the holding barn and back, came home and listened to the music at The Horseshoe all night."

**Into Happiness:** When Windylea Farm's 4-year-old filly won on Opening Day, she did it the hard way – dropping to last in a 10-horse field and passing the whole lot of them in three-eighths of a mile. She started with an inside post, spun five wide off the turn, made it seven at the top of the stretch and kept on rolling to win by 3 1/2 lengths. Hennig didn't draw it up that way, but he came up with a strong upstate New York description for the rally. "Look how far back she was (at three-eighths pole)," he said while watching the replay. "She was in Porter Corners." For the geographically challenged (we had to look it up), Porter Corners is 10.3 miles northwest of Saratoga Race Course and Wikipedia calls it a "hamlet." Into Happiness gets a chance to try it again in today's eighth race. Hennig will hope for the same outcome, maybe with a

**Continued On Page 10**





JIM McKAY

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## Stable Tour —

■ Continued from page 8

little less drama. "She got the one hole again, so we'll see. I don't want her to get that far behind again."

**Love Thyself:** A \$28,000 purchase at last year's Fasig-Tipton New York-bred sale, Alan Brodsky's 2-year-old filly officially gets credit with her debut here July 26. It didn't last long. From the inside post, she broke to her right and then reacted when a rival to her outside shifted left. Love Thyself ducked into the rail, sent Velazquez to the turf and — after blasting plastic rail in all directions — followed the field while between the rail and inside hedge. "She's a little high strung and I thought she handled everything great that day, until she came out of the gate. I was more worried about her getting to the gate. She just shied from the horse coming over next to her, reacted to it. She bumped that temporary rail, the top rail didn't release and it was strung across her chest, like she couldn't get rid of it. She had some cuts on a hind leg they had to put some staples in but they're out now. She maybe walked one extra day, but she's been training now and is good. She's fine. I need to break her once and then run her. She was relatively unscathed for as scary as it was. Alan's line was, 'I think she prefers the inner turf.' "

**Nobilis:** A \$17,000 Fasig-Tipton October yearling purchase, the 3-year-old Speightster colt finished third here for Commonwealth Stable and Randy Bradshaw Aug. 2 — his fourth top-three placing in five lifetime starts. Hennig wants to see a better beginning to the New York-bred's races. "He breaks well, then he backs up 10 lengths and comes running. He gives everything up and then tries to regain it again. He ran well the other day and came out of the race well. He's sharp."

**Bourbon Outlaw:** A \$250,000 purchase for Seidman Stable, Bourbon Lane Racing and Lake Star Stable in March, the 2-year-old Into Mischief colt has worked three times at Saratoga while prepping for his debut. "We're trying to make a race here, but it will be close timing-wise. We're not getting a lot of cooperation on the weather."

**Volkert:** Windylea Farm's 5-year-old Bayern gelding won at 25-1 while sprinting on the turf for a \$35,000 claiming tag here July 29. The New York-bred won for Hennig in 2021, lost all three starts last year and returned this spring after missing eight months. "He was pretty tough the day he won, really had to dig in and get there. He should get another race before the end of the meet." The Windylea horses are a big part of Hennig's barn and continue a long association with New York racing for the O'Neill family. Founded by Phil O'Neill (who died in 2021) and now managed by his son Kip, Windylea races homebreds, buys at the sales and is active in claiming races. "Kip does a great job managing it. He always keeps live horses in the barn and if they aren't going to be productive here, he'll



Tod Marks

**Mark Hennig.**

move them to Finger Lakes. Sometimes when the water gets deep in the summer with horses it's better to take some of them where they can be competitive. They can get their confidence back. You can't force them all to be Saratoga horses."

**Oolong Hai:** Staghawk Stable's Irish-bred filly by No Nay Never is winless in five starts, but was third on Belmont Stakes Day. She should have run back by now, Hennig said. "I want to run her, but she keeps getting unlucky. Her last race got rained off here. I'm trying to get her back in, and hopefully she gets to run because 5 1/2 (furlongs) here will suit her a lot better."

**Mad Banker:** Seidman Stable's 2-year-old Central Banker colt makes his debut in Friday's seventh race and, like several of the barn's juveniles, is coming along. "He's probably going to need one just to have the light come on completely but he's OK."

**Harry Hood:** Claimed by Hennig and Mashnee Stable July 28, the 3-year-old First Samurai gelding won once in four starts for trainer Chad Brown this year. The Kentucky-bred was fourth behind July 22 Saratoga winner Taking Candy at Churchill Downs in May. Hennig paid credit to his wife Rose for some of the claiming homework. "She's good at watching races and then tracking horses that ran and who they ran against. He ran well in Kentucky and that horse came back and ran well here. Mashnee wanted a horse to run later on at the meet and we were in a shake to get him. You always hope those work out."

**Tough Times:** Don't forget this guy. The 8-year-old son of Tapit and Grade 2 winner Af-leeting Lady lost all five starts as a racehorse, but found a new career as the stable pony. He's frequently Rose Hennig's mount and a key part of the equation. "He had some scar tissue from bleeding, so he just never ran to his ability," said Rose. "He's been an awesome asset, but we had to teach him a little bit. He once in a while gets feisty, but he's been really helpful. The fillies that we go with, it's an unbelievable difference (when he's around). It can be crazy here. Loose horses, whatever. They'll just tuck their heads in and be, 'OK, I'm with my buddy.' I completely spoil him with carrots. I have a carrot in my back pocket almost always."



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# Family Matters

Curlin-Beholder colt tops sale at \$4 million

BY TOM LAW

Bob Baffert spent years watching Beholder stride past his barn to train on the main track at Santa Anita Park during her Hall of Fame career. He admired the eventual Hall of Fame mare's coiled and sometimes uncoiled energy, and saw a lot of those same qualities in her fifth foal when he made it to the sales grounds this week for the 102nd Fasig-Tipton Saratoga Sale.

"I stabled next to Richard Mandella and watched Beholder walk by my barn every day," Baffert said.

Continued On Page 14



Tod Marks

Hip 165, a colt by Curlin out of Beholder, topped the whole sale at \$4 million Tuesday night.



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## Sale —

### Continued from page 12

“She was a handful and he looks like he’s a handful, too. With a pedigree like that you have to take a swing at it, if you want to play at the top level.”

Baffert and his crew, which included agent Donato Lanni and owner Amr Zedan, took a huge swing and landed the colt for \$4 million halfway through Tuesday night’s session that seemed destined to set records after the first few horses passed through the ring. The \$4 million price for Hip 165 was the co-third most expensive in the 102-year history of the Saratoga Sale, tied with a Roberto colt sold in 1984 and only behind the \$4.6 million paid for a Northern Dancer colt in at that same sale and \$4.2 million for a Seattle Slew colt in 2000.

“It’s very rare you will find a horse with that kind of pedigree,” Baffert said. “Mr. Zedan wants to play. It’s a lot of money for a horse that can’t run so we’ll just have to find out.”

Baffert is banking on the colt being able to run, if not quite up to the other-worldly standard of Curlin and Beholder then perhaps more in line with the mare’s 3-year-old Grade 3 winner Teena Ella (by War Front) in training with Mandella in California.

### Fasig-Tipton Yearling Sale

#### 2023 Statistics

Sold: 153. Gross: \$74,780,000.  
Average: \$488,758. Not Sold: 50.  
Median: \$375,000.

#### 2022 Statistics

Sold: 143. Gross: \$66,955,000.  
Average: \$468,217. Not Sold: 36.  
Median: \$375,000.

“He looks like an athlete,” Baffert said. “Hopefully everything goes well. He’s an outstanding individual. We loved him, obviously, at the barn. We’re very excited. He’s headed to California.”

Baffert and Zedan, known best for campaigning the ill-fated and disqualified Kentucky Derby winner Medina Spirit, have struck for several top racing prospects including the sale-toppers at the OBS April sale for \$2.2 million and OBS March sale for \$2 million. Medina Spirit also sold at a 2-year-old sale, bringing \$35,000 at the 2020 OBS July sale. Zedan also bought Grade 1 winners Taiba, Arabian Lion and Princess Noor and

Continued On Page 16



Tod Marks

Hip 135, an Into Mischief-Rachel’s Valentina colt, sold for \$1.5 million to Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners Tuesday night.



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*Above: Henry Shrady (American, 1871-1922)  
Horse and Jockey, 1904 (detail)*



Tod Marks

Hip 123, a Tapit-Paola Queen colt, brought \$1.1 million on a bid by Mike Ryan.

## Sale —

### ■ Continued from page 14

Grade 3 winner and possible H. Allen Jerkens contender Arabian Knight for high prices as juvenile sales.

“Like the boss said, it’s very difficult to find this kind of bloodline,” Zedan said. “It’s a rarity to find them at auction. We’ve done quite well with the 2-year-olds, and coming in here, seeing the quality, we took some time to actually take a look at him and really appreciate who he is as an individual. But again, when you have Mr. Baffert in your corner you just follow him blindly. He’s the best in history and he doesn’t need my testimony for that.”

“Spending that kind of money, it’s a lot, but from an operational standpoint for the portfolio that we’ve got it’s a well-hedged, well-calculated venture and it’s not like we were shooting from the hip.”

The \$4 million colt and another who brought \$3.2 million from the same buyers late in the night, helped spark records for the two-day sale that started Monday under threatening skies. Tuesday brought a perfect summer night in upstate New York with a breeze to keep the lubricated patrons around the back bar cool and the yearlings feisty in the walking ring.

Fasig-Tipton reported sales on 153 of the 202 yearlings through the ring for a record \$74,780,000, up 11.7 percent from total receipts of \$66,955,000 for 143 yearlings sold last year.

The sale’s average price came in at a record \$488,758, up 4.4 percent from \$468,217 last year, while the record median held firm at \$375,000. The buyback rate, which hit 28.2 percent during Monday’s opening session, dropped to 23.3 percent Tuesday and finished at a low 24.6 percent for a boutique auction.

“We’ve experienced some magical nights in Saratoga in the past, and you’ve heard me talk about the Saratoga magic, but we ain’t seen nothing like tonight,” said Boyd Browning Jr., Fasig-Tipton president and chief executive officer. “It was literally spectacular from the first hip in the ring . . . to the very conclusion of the sale.”

“It just goes to show you what happens when you have the opportunity to sell exceptional physical horses that have outstanding pedigrees to an unbelievable group of buyers that love coming to Saratoga. It’s indicative of the enthusiasm that’s created with great racing, hopefully great individuals, great effort. You hear me talking at times about dedication of the men and women of this company and it’s true. The results are evident

**Continued On Page 17**



# Sale —

## ■ Continued from page 16

by a sale like tonight. It was just phenomenal. It's really rewarding to see people send their very best horses here and trust us. Then to have the results and success that they had tonight."

With the electricity already rocking the sales ring, Hip 165 made the short walk across George Street from Taylor Made's barn and into the walking ring just before 8 p.m. He attracted plenty of attention as he made several spins around the ring, keeping calm as fans snapped pictures and potential buyers took one last look.

The chestnut colt with one full white sock and big blaze figured to bring \$3 million and when auctioneer Danny Green asked for that price to start it didn't seem that out of line. He eventually started things at \$500,000, and it rose to \$1 million immediately on an online bid. The colt showed some of that Beholder spunk when bidding reached \$1.7 million, drawing oohs and aahs from the crowd, and a few cheers when the bidding hit \$2 million. Fifteen bids followed, and the price quickly surpassed \$2.5 million to \$2.9 million onsite and then \$3 million online.

All remained quiet in the ring as bidding reached \$100,000 and \$50,000 increments from \$3.75 million to \$3.9 million and eventually \$3.95 million. Lanni landed the \$4 million bid and afterward Green cautioned the crowd to hold their applause until the star colt left the ring.

"Was he getting after it pretty good down there?" Baffert said as he accepted congratulations from members of the Taylor Made Sales team.

"That was \$400,000, right?" Baffert joked.

Frank Taylor didn't miss a beat.

"I'll have to check that," he said.

Mark Taylor watched the Curlin colt's introduction from the back ring alongside his brothers Frank and Duncan and other members of the Taylor Made team. Shortly after bidding commenced, Taylor headed for the pavilion alone, making his way to the mezzanine.

He was midway up the stairs when the son of Hall of Famers reared in the ring, setting off a tumult from the



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# Sale —

■ Continued from page 17

crowd. Taylor hurried up the stairs to catch sight of the colt. He watched the price rise from there, catching him go past \$3.5 million behind three rows of spectators holding cell phones above their heads with cameras rolling. He blended in with the crowd, looking far from the president and CEO of the farm selling the historic yearling. The pavilion fell silent as the number neared \$4 million.

“It was kind of surreal really,” Taylor said once the hammer fell. “It’s crazy. I just want to go over here and make sure the horse gets back to the barn OK.”

Taylor walked outside and watched the chestnut colt walk through the back ring toward the barn before rejoining his team, and eventually, the winning bidders inside.

Zedan, Baffert and Lanni struck again just before the end of Tuesday’s session, winning an extended duel from the same spot in the mezzanine for Hip 228, a colt by Into Mischief.

Bred by Jeff Drown and Don Rachel and consigned by Indian Creek, agent, the colt is the first foal out of the American Pharoah mare All American Dream, a half-sister to European stakes winner Wind Fire from the family of Grade 1 Hopeful win-



Continued On Page 20

Hip 140, a Twirling Candy-Rehearsed colt, went for \$1 million.

Tod Marks

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Hip	Pedigree	Seller	Buyer	Price
165	CURLIN-BEHOLDER, C .....	TAYLOR MADE SALES, AGENT FOR SPENDTHRIFT FARM.....	DONATO LANNI, AGENT FOR ZEDAN RACING.....	\$4,000,000
228	INTO MISCHIEF-ALL AMERICAN DREAM, C .....	INDIAN CREEK AGENT .....	DONATO LANNI, AGENT FOR ZEDAN RACING.....	\$3,200,000
135	INTO MISCHIEF-RACHEL'S VALENTINA, C.....	TAYLOR MADE SALES, AGENT FOR STONESTREET BRED & RAISED .....	ECLIPSE THOROUGHBRED PARTNERS .....	\$1,500,000
129	TAPIT-PLENTY O'TOOLE, C .....	TAYLOR MADE SALES AGENCY AGENT CXVI .....	WHISPER HILL FARM .....	\$1,200,000
123	TAPIT-PAOLA QUEEN, C.....	GAINESWAY AGENT II.....	MIKE RYAN, AGENT .....	\$1,100,000
208	INTO MISCHIEF-VIRGINIA KEY, C .....	ST GEORGE SALES AGENT VI .....	CHC INC, SIENA FARM & MAVERICK RACING .....	\$1,000,000
194	GUN RUNNER-TEMPTRESS, F .....	HILL 'N' DALE AT XALAPA AGENT.....	RANDY GULLATT AGT,JACKPOT FARM,.....	\$1,000,000
			WHISPERING OAKS, RICK ORTYL	
140	TWIRLING CANDY-REHEARSED, C .....	LANE'S END AGENT .....	CHUCK SONSON & WEST POINT, L.E.B., AGENT .....	\$1,000,000
122	NOT THIS TIME-PAMMY WHAMMY, C .....	GAINESWAY AGENT VII.....	HARTLEY/DE RENZO THOROUGHBREDS.....	\$900,000
202	WAR FRONT-TRUE STYLE, F.....	BEDOUIIN BLOODSTOCK AGENT I .....	JOHN KIMMEL & NICK SALLUSTO AGENT FOR SEAN FLANAGAN.....	\$800,000

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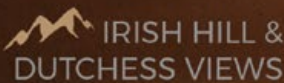


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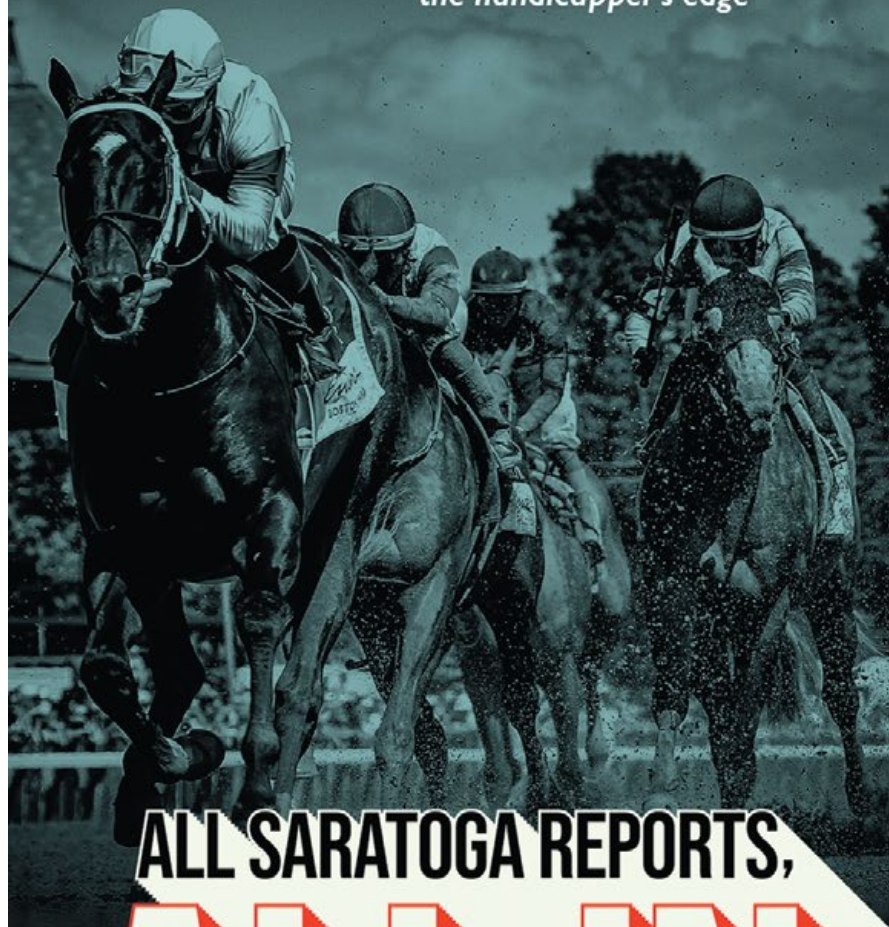
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## Sale —

■ Continued from page 18

ner Majestic Warrior.

“Very electric,” Lanni said. “Fasig-Tipton did a beautiful job bringing a lot of good horses here. It’s a typical Saratoga sale, everybody’s here and everybody is ready to buy good horses. It’s good to see the market as strong as it is. It’s pretty remarkable.”

“This was a pretty exceptional horse. He had the best of both. He had the Into Mischief look and the American Pharoah look. He was such a cool individual. Every time I walked by that barn he was out for somebody. Every time. I don’t think I ever saw him inside. He did everything right every time. There was never a time he had a bad moment. He was such a cool horse. That’s really rare to find a horse that is that cool. We couldn’t go home without him.”

The second session started fast and without any of the feel-it-out moments typically seen. After a share in top young sire Not This Time sold for \$2 million to an undisclosed buyer, the second yearling through the ring, Hip 122, a colt by Not This Time, sold for \$900,000. The third yearling, Hip 123, a colt by Tapit out of Grade 1 Test winner Paola Queen and half-brother to a colt who topped the Saratoga Sale at \$2.6 million in 2021, sold for \$1.1 million to Mike Ryan, agent for an undisclosed syndicate.

Two more seven-figure colts came next – Hip 129, a son of Tapit purchased by Mandy Pope’s Whisper Hill Farm for \$1.2 million; and Hip 135, a son of Into Mischief bought by Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners for

\$1.5 million.

Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners’ Aron Wellman signed the ticket for the colt out of Rachel’s Valentina, a daughter of Bernardini and Hall of Famer Rachel Alexandra who was bred by Stonestreet Thoroughbred Holdings.

“He was an absolute standout all week long,” Wellman said. “He’s by arguably the greatest sire of our generation, Into Mischief, and out of a Grade 1-winning mare who is by Bernardini, one of the best broodmare sires. She’s out of Rachel Alexandra, who is arguably one of the greatest racemares of our generation. As far as his pedigree is concerned it speaks for itself, but he has to match up physically and he did that every which way. He’s bred not just the right way but by the right people. They raise them incredibly well at Stonestreet. Year after year they’re turning out champions. Incredible operation.”

“What can I say, I’m always reluctant to accept congratulations signing a ticket for a horse before it’s ever run. I’d rather let the congratulations come after he’s run, but time will tell as it always does. We’re just honored to have partners behind us that are willing to take a swing for the fences on a colt like this.”

Taylor Made sold three of the four most expensive yearlings. Hip 129 is out of the winning Tiznow mare Plenty O’Toole, the dam of multiple graded stakes winner Mr. Money and two other winners.

“Both horses we knew were very popular and were special horses, special offerings,” Taylor said of the Into Mischief colt and the Tapit colt. “We knew both were going to sell very

**Continued On Page 22**

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# Sale —

■ Continued from page 20

well, but you never know. All these top-end buyers are trying to compare the stock on offer, determine what their strategy is. You never know.

“The first time I saw the Rachel’s Valentina, I thought that horse could feasibly top the sale. The Stonestreet program just has such a following. People want to buy Stonestreet-bred horses, they know they raise them the right way, and their track record of producing runners is incredible. The Tapit colt, I had never seen him until he got here, but my nephew Marshall had seen him in Florida and loved him. I kept hearing about how awesome he was, so when I finally got up here I was like ‘Wow.’ He wasn’t kidding.”

Eight yearlings sold for \$1 million or more during the final session, bringing the overall total to 10 for the two days. That was down from 14 seven-figure yearlings in 2022, but inching close to the record set in 1984 and the average price close to \$500,000 were significant.

Fasig-Tipton also realized growth in total sales from \$55,155,000 in 2021 to \$66,955,000 last year to this year’s record figure, a gain of more than \$19.625 million or 35.6 percent. The average has grown in almost lockstep, going from \$408,556 to



Fasig-Tipton

Hip 228 hit \$3.2 million late in the second session.

this year’s \$488,758, an increase of 19.6 percent in those two years since the Saratoga Sale was not held because of the coronavirus pandemic.

“The consistency of bidding throughout the night, particularly on the upper-end lots and anything over \$300,000, at times the auctioneers and bid spotters had trouble keeping up with the bidding. Not because they weren’t doing their job but there were so many bids coming it was hard to keep up,” Browning said. “It was an unbelievable atmosphere and unbelievable results tonight.”

The strong returns also came in the midst of plenty of talk about issues within the Thoroughbred industry, from debate over federal legislation, to injuries during Kentucky Derby Week and to Maple Leaf Mel’s fatal breakdown in the Grade 1 Test two days before the sale.

“We’ve talked about the resiliency before. The people at the upper levels of this game have a genuine love and affection for horses. They have a genuine love and affection for racing. They have unbelievable appetite to win and compete at the highest levels. The one thing about horse racing, there are no judges per se. We’re going to line my horse up against your horse and see who has the best horse. Sometimes it’s the \$50,000 horse that’s the best horse, or the \$5 million horse that’s the best.”

“It’s also the camaraderie. There was great compassion by our industry participants in a tough week. No question about it. It was a tough week and selfishly I wondered, ‘Oh God, is this going to have a negative impact?’ It’s incumbent on all of us moving forward that despite the results tonight, we know our industry faces challenges. And every single participant in this industry needs to strive to continue to do better on the racing front, on the sales front, on the breeding front to make sure our sport and industry continue to grow and prosper in the future.”

*Additional reporting by Nolan Clancy.*

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# All heart, no foam

## Venti Valentine eyes Wed. feature

BY MARY RUFO

Venti Valentine openly displayed her heart and personality on an overcast morning at Saratoga Race Course Tuesday.

The spunky chestnut filly spent the beginning of her day begging anyone she could for affection, while giving some in return. She stretched her neck out of her stall, tilting her head as if to judge you for not giving her the attention she wanted. Perhaps she was just looking for support from her hype team in preparation for her start in today's Johnston Mile Handicap. Restricted to New York-bred fillies and mares, the Johnston honors former

### JOHNSTONE MILE STAKES PREVIEW

trainer and NYRA manager of operations Bruce Johnstone, who died in 2020. It's the ninth race on the card, and goes at 5:44 p.m.

Venti Valentine, a 4-year-old daughter of Firing Line, takes on six in the 1-mile stakes out of the Wilson Chute. Last year, she won Aqueduct's Busher Stakes in March and finished second in the Grade 3 Gazelle to make the field for the Kentucky Oaks for NYFinal Furlong Racing Stable and Parkland Thoroughbreds and

Continued On Page 25



Tod Marks

Venti Valentine eyes her fifth win for trainer Jorge Abreu.

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# Johnstone —

■ Continued from page 24

trainer Jorge Abreu. She finished last in the Oaks and lost three more times, but rebounded to win the Bay Ridge Stakes at Aqueduct in December.

Given a five-month break, she returned to the races in May and produced a fourth in the Critical Eye Stakes and a third in open allowance company June 24. Third in the Fleet Indian here last year, she seeks her first Saratoga win.

Dan Zanatta and Vince Roth of NY Final Furlong look forward to seeing Venti Valentine in the Wednesday feature as the 3-1 co-second choice on the morning line. Zanatta thinks the filly has a strong chance.

"We've never won a stake at Saratoga, that's on the bucket list for us," Zanatta said. "It would mean a lot to us."

You may wonder where the name comes from since it doesn't connect to her sire or dam (Glory Gold). Truth be told, it came from the day she was born and the beverage her owners and breeders (Final Furlong and Maspeth Stable) were likely drinking that morning.

"So her sister's name is Espresso Shot," Roth said of Venti Valentine's

stakes-winning half-sister by Mission Impazible. "We wanted to keep on the coffee theme and she was born on Valentine's Day. She's also pretty giant."

Venti comes from what once was the largest size drink at Starbucks. Perhaps they could've updated her name to Trienta Valentine, but that doesn't have the same ring even if it has more caffeine.

Champion New York-bred 2-year-old filly of 2021, Venti Valentine has earned \$548,850 to go with Espresso Shot's \$516,625 and looks to add to that with a win at Saratoga. The Johnstone would go a long way toward putting her in the mix for another New York-bred championship. Manny Franco rides Venti Valentine from the inside post.

Co-second choice with Venti Valentine, Betsy Blue represents Cloud Nine Stable and trainer Linda Rice while looking for her 11th lifetime win. The daughter of Tonalist won five last year and opened 2023 with a win in the Interborough Stakes at Aqueduct. Jose Lezcano rides from post five. Rice also sends out Bustin Bay for Winning Move Stable. Claimed out of a win in April, she has won her last two for Rice. Kendrick Carmouche takes the ride at 6-1 from post four.

Trainer Ray Handal sends out Timeless Journey for owner/breeder

Merrylegs Farm. She finished third in the Critical Eye, just ahead of Venti Valentine. Handal is pleased with her training progress coming off a layoff of 2 1/2 months. Joel Rosario takes the ride at 9-2 from post six.

"She's doing really well, she's always been a good training-type filly," Handal said. "I think the freshening helps her out quite a bit."

Christophe Clement trained Timeless Journey prior to being transferred to Handal and she did much of her running on the turf. Handal moved her to dirt in November, and she's

won three seven since.

"I like the way she's trained on the main track," Handal said "She's had a lot of big gallop-outs in all of her workouts."

Sunset Louise rates as the slight 5-2 favorite in the Johnstone for Vince Stanzione and trainer Bruce Levine. She looks to remain unbeaten in 2023, and become a stakes winner, while seeking her fifth win of the year. She breaks from post two for Luis Saez.

Know It All Audrey and Mia Bea Star round out the field.

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Wednesday, August 9.

1ST (1:10PM). \$70,000, ALW, 4 YO'S & UP, 2 3/8M (HURDLE)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double				
1	.....1	Rhebus Road (IRE)	T. Garner	8-1
2	.....2	Cibolian	P. Hendriks	9-2
3	.....3	Bandua	N. Morris	3-1
4	.....4	Rampoldi Plan	L. Young	2-1
5	.....5	Brooklyn Drivers	J. Davies	12-1
6	.....6	High Monte (IRE)	A. Kingsley, Jr	8-1
7	.....7	Neotropic	J. Fisher	4-1

2ND (1:46PM). \$45,000, CLM \$25,000, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M , 6 1/2F

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 5, Daily Double				
1	.....6	Shigeko	M. Kantarmaci	7-2
1a	.....8	Carbon	M. Kantarmaci	7-2
2	.....1	Aeron Warrior	D. Donk	8-1
3	.....2	Handle the Truth	R. Metivier	15-1
4	.....3	Joey the Fish	R. Persaud	30-1
5	.....4	Sweet Sensation	D. Seyler	30-1
6	.....5	Harlan's Bond	D. Donk	5-1
7	.....7	Our Rosie Diamonds	M. Nevin	8-1
8	.....9	Susie's Saver	J. Paragallo	10-1
9	.....10	Pillbox	S. Joseph, Jr	6-5

3RD (2:19PM). \$88,000, MSW, 2 YO, F , 5 1/2F (TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 4, Daily Double, Quinella				
1	.....1	Turbo Maggie	R. Sells	20-1
2	.....2	Play Free Bird	G. Contessa	6-1
3	.....3	Tricky Temper	J. Englehart	2-1
4	.....4	Dorth's Sol Dancer	M. Ferraro	10-1
5	.....5	Lonchura	A. Chichakly	6-1
6	.....6	Stormy Disco	M. Dini	8-1
7	.....7	Red Burgundy	H. De Paz	7-2
8	.....8	My Kinda Mischief	C. Martin	9-2
9	.....AE-MTO	Miss d'Or Cherie	C. Clement	3-1
10	.....AE-MTO	Call Her Bluff	R. Rodriguez	15-1
11	.....AE-MTO	Pretty Up	R. Rodriguez	9-2
12	.....AE-MTO	Realta	T. Albertrani	10-1

4TH (2:52PM). \$156,000, AOC \$62,500, 3 YO'S & UP, 1 3/8M (INNER TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double				
1	.....5	Tide of the Sea	T. Morley	9-5
1a	.....8	Dynadrive	T. Morley	9-5
2	.....1	Cross Border	M. Maker	5-1
3	.....2	Moliere	M. Kantarmaci	30-1
4	.....3	Classic Catch	T. Pletcher	4-1
5	.....4	Royal Tryst	M. Arenas	20-1
6	.....6	Burning Bright	N. Casse	6-1
7	.....7	Corelli	J. Thomas	2-1
8	.....AE-MTO	Ouster	M. Hennig	7-5
9	.....AE-MTO	Costa Terra	L. Rice	3-1
10	.....AE-MTO	Trident Hit	R. Moquett	8-1

5TH (3:26PM). \$83,000, MSW, 2 YO, F , 6F

Exacta, Quinella, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 6, Daily Double				
1	.....1	Lady Prospect	R. Rodriguez	8-1
2	.....2	Day Away	G. Contessa	20-1
3	.....3	Zadorsky	W. Catalano	5-2
4	.....4	Elusive Fashion	K. Brion	12-1
5	.....5	Shimmering Allure	K. McPeek	6-1
6	.....6	Athena	J. Paragallo	20-1
7	.....7	Bornforgreatness	T. Hills	15-1
8	.....8	Echo Lake	C. Brown	5-1
9	.....9	Crazy Cami	M. Maker	7-2
10	.....10	Extra Dirty	C. Brown	8-1

6TH (4:00PM). \$136,500, MSW, 2 YO, F , 5 1/2F (TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 5, Daily Double				
1	.....1	Buttercream Babe	M. Maker	10-1
2	.....2	Tap the Keg	R. Handal	20-1
3	.....3	Lyrical Pardon	T. Amoss	12-1
4	.....4	Mia Marcela	S. Asmussen	4-1
5	.....5	Reagan's Version (GB)	C. DeVaux	6-1
6	.....6	My Cora	T. Pletcher	6-1
7	.....7	Jody's Pride	J. Abreu	5-2
8	.....8	Z Train (IRE)	A. Dutrow	8-1
9	.....9	Housefly (IRE)	M. Maker	8-1
10	.....10	Sugar N Spice	F. Abreu	15-1
11	.....AE	Into Stars	B. Cox	6-1
12	.....AE	Luz Divina	T. Hamm	10-1
13	.....AE	Honey Dijon	J. Sharp	8-1
14	.....AE	Bundchen	W. Ward	7-2
15	.....AE-MTO	Bobby Jean	M. Hennig	12-1
16	.....AE-MTO	Solve the Puzzle	C. Brown	2-1

7TH (4:34PM). \$45,000, CLM \$25,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 6 1/2F

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 4, Daily Double				
1	.....1	Basis Risk	M. Coffey	30-1
2	.....2	Red D G P	J. Ferraro	8-1
3	.....3	Modern Midas	R. Rodriguez	30-1
4	.....4	Asymmetric	C. Brown	2-1
5	.....5	Pressure	R. Rodriguez	12-1
6	.....6	Sounds Spooky	E. Jones	30-1
7	.....7	Hatch	C. Martin	10-1
8	.....8	Morning Cup	L. Rice	9-2
9	.....9	Tommy Gun	M. Maker	6-1
10	.....10	Clubhouse	T. Pletcher	3-1

8TH (5:10PM). \$149,500, AOC \$50,000, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M , 1M

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double				
1	.....1	Into Happiness	M. Hennig	6-1
2	.....2	In My Opinion	A. Bedard	30-1
3	.....3	Raging Sea	C. Brown	8-5
4	.....4	Fancy Azteca	R. Dutrow, Jr	12-1
5	.....5	Pharoah's Heart	M. Nevin	7-2
6	.....6	Shezz Koldazice	W. Morey	10-1
7	.....7	Coppa Girl	B. Cox	9-2
8	.....8	Sweet Willemina	S. Lake	8-1
9	.....9	Vienna Code	A. Williams	30-1

9TH (5:44PM). \$125,000, STK - THE JOHNSTONE MILE, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M , 1M

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Daily Double				
1	.....1	Venti Valentine	J. Abreu	3-1
2	.....2	Sunset Louise	B. Levine	5-2
3	.....3	Know It All Audrey	O. Barrera, III	8-1
4	.....4	Bustin Bay	L. Rice	6-1
5	.....5	Betsy Blue	L. Rice	3-1
6	.....6	Timeless Journey	R. Handal	9-2
7	.....7	Mia Bea Star	R. Persaud	20-1

10TH (6:18PM). \$88,000, MSW, 3 YO'S & UP, 1M (INNER TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta				
1	.....1	Morethanafeeling	J. Servis	8-1
2	.....2	Mugsy Fury	R. Davis	30-1
3	.....3	Z Dancer	R. Romero	10-1
4	.....4	Impazible Prince	G. Albright	15-1
5	.....5	Paschal Moon	J. Camejo	12-1
6	.....6	Slapintheface	A. Dutrow	3-1
7	.....7	Kid Kreesa	L. Dixon	15-1
8	.....8	Lt. Mitchell	L. Rice	6-1
9	.....9	Tony O	D. Donk	5-1
10	.....10	Bastion	T. Albertrani	20-1
11	.....11	Union Trail	B. Tagg	10-1
12	.....12	Chulligan	C. Clement	6-1
13	.....AE	Heroneandonly	G. Goodwin	30-1
14	.....AE-MTO	Refuah	P. Walder	9-2
15	.....AE-MTO	Squid Gamer	C. Baker	3-1
16	.....AE-MTO	The Manticore	P. Meadow	30-1

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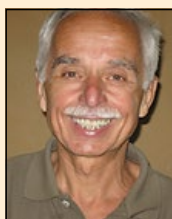
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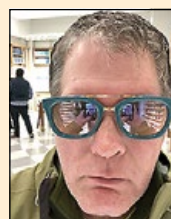
### The **POWER** Grid



**John Shapazian**



**Tom Law**



**Rob Whitlock**



**Charles Bedard**



**Jessica Paquette**

Race	John Shapazian	Tom Law	Rob Whitlock	Charles Bedard	Jessica Paquette
<b>1</b>	— — —	— — —	— — —	— — —	— — —
<b>2</b>	Pillbox Kantarmaci entry Our Rosie Diamond	Pillbox Our Rosie Diamonds Harlan's Bond	Kantarmaci entry Pillbox Harlan's Bond	Kantarmaci entry Aeron Warrior Pillbox	Pillbox Harlan's Bond Shigeko
<b>3</b>	Tricky Temper Miss d'Or Cherie Dorth's Sol Dancer	Miss d'Or Cherie Red Burgandy Tricky Temper	Red Burgundy Dorth's Sol Dancer Tricky Temper	Pretty Up Play Free Bird My Kinda Mischief	Tricky Temper Lonchura Dorth's Sol Dancer
<b>4</b>	Ouster Classic Catch Morley entry	Ouster Morley entry Corelli	Classic Catch Morley entry Burning Bright	Ouster Royal Tryst Morley entry	Corelli Dynadrive Cross Border
<b>5</b>	Crazy Cami Shimmering Allure Zadorsky	Zadorsky Echo Lake Lady Prospect	Zadorsky Crazy Cami Extra Dirty	Crazy Cami Elusive Fashion Echo Lake	Elusive Fashion Bornforgreatness Zadorsky
<b>6</b>	Bundchen Solve The Puzzle Jody's Pride	Solve The Puzzle Reagan's Version Mia Marcela	Sugar n Spice Lyrical Pardon Tap The Keg	Bobby Jean Mia Marcela Bundchen	My Cora Reagan's Vision Mia Marcela
<b>7</b>	Morning Cup Asymmetric Tommy Gun	Asymmetric Clubhouse Tommy Gun	Asymmetric Hatch Morning Cup	Tommy Gun Asymmetric Pressure	Asymmetric Pressure Clubhouse
<b>8</b>	Raging Sea Coppa Girl Pharoah's Heart	Raging Sea Coppa Girl Into Happiness	Fancy Azteca Raging Sea Coppa Girl	Raging Sea Shezz Koldazice Coppa Girl	Raging Sea Sweet Willemina Into Happiness
<b>9</b>	Sunset Louise Betsy Blue Know It All Audrey	Betsy Blue Venti Valentine Sunset Louise	Sunset Louise Betsy Blue Mia Bea Star	Sunset Louise Timeless Journey Know It All Audrey	Bustin Bay Timeless Journey Sunset Louise
<b>10</b>	Slapintheface Chulligan Lt. Mitchell	Squid Gamer Slapintheface Morethanafeeling	Slapintheface Lt Mitchell Tony O	Squid Gamer Slapintheface Impazable Prince	Paschal Moon Morethanafeeling Chulligan
2023 Records	<b>61/193</b>	<b>51/193</b>	<b>52/193</b>	<b>68/193</b>	<b>32/193</b>



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# Story Time

## Vallelujah earns Friday stakes start for Davis, owners

BY TOM LAW

Anyone in need of a pick-me-up?

It's been a long meet in a lot of ways, with last weekend's tragedies and outcomes, the grind of sales week, a scrapped steeplechase race, concerns with the turf course casting a fair bit of dread on the scene.

Robbie Davis is the complete opposite. Stabled in a low-roof barn on the harness track with a few other "little guy" trainers, he's won one race so far this year after just two in 2022. But don't think for a minute he's lost perspective or a brighter-than-bright outlook that helped pull him out of more

Continued On Page 29



Tod Marks

Vallelujah tackles Friday's Union Avenue Stakes for trainer Robbie Davis and a big cast of owners.

**2023 TRAINING CENTER GRADUATES:**

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# Union Avenue —

■ Continued from page 28

than anyone's share of dark days.

"We're having a great time," Davis said, back at the barn and after training on the main track Tuesday morning. "Life is good, and it just keeps getting better."

Davis hopes to keep the good vibe rolling Friday when he sends out Val-lelujah in the \$125,000 Union Avenue Handicap for New York-bred fillies and mares. The 4-year-old daughter of Teuflesberg, campaigned in partnership by a group that formed during the spectator-free 2020 Saratoga meet, produced one of the stories of last year's meet with a victory in a 7-furlong allowance race.

Jackie Davis, one of Robbie and Marguerite Davis' six children, rode Val-lelujah that day and in all of her starts. She takes the call again Friday from post four in the field of six.

"She's earned her way into that spot. She's lost all her New York-bred conditions ... she was going through them, had a few seconds and then won last time off a five-month lay-



Tod Marks

Robbie Davis,

off," Robbie Davis said of Val-lelujah. "I expected her to run good but she had other ideas. She just went out and hung it out there. She'd been training really well, and ever since. She's an a-other-than if she ran in open company and they ran seven-eighths in 1:22 the other day, so I thought, 'let's stick to where we're at, not overthink it.' The Union Avenue came up."

Val-lelujah is owned by East Ave Racing Stable and breeder Carolyn Karlson's Sisu Racing Stable. She's won three of 16 starts and earned \$201,548. East Ave Racing came to-

gether after gathering in the mornings to watch training from a spot outside the fence near the top of the stretch on the Oklahoma Training Track.

Davis joked that if Val-leluja pulls off another upset in the Union Avenue, where she'd need to top defending champ Bank On Anna, open-company stakes winner Betsy Blue and four-time winner Grannys Connection, the party might spill out into the nearby streets around Saratoga Race Course.

"It was so exciting to win with her last year. They're a great group, a super group. I'm just thrilled," Davis said. "At first I was like, 'I really stuck my foot in my mouth' saying they should buy a horse. They went and bought this horse for \$7,000 and said I should train it. And here I am up against Chad and Todd, and they all have New York-breds now. It isn't easy. It used to be kind of a fun group for the little guys. You could always get a win or two during the meet. Now, they're all ringers."

"I met these guys on East Avenue, they were on the outside fence. You might have to close the road over there and have a block party if she wins."

The wins have come for the Davis family so far at this year's Saratoga meet.

Dylan Davis leads the way with nine wins and \$739,784 in purses, good for 10th in the standings heading into Wednesday's card. Katie Davis has three winners — one more than her husband Trevor McCarthy — and delivered the couple's first child in late 2021. Jackie Davis has yet to win from 16 mounts, but has 23 wins and is tied for sixth in the Finger Lakes rider standings through Tuesday.

The Davis family made what's believed to be history July 29 when Queens Dancer, under Katie Davis, finished a half-length in front of Sandy's Garden and Jackie Davis in a New York-bred allowance race on the main track.

Robbie Davis won 3,382 races as a jockey and battled back from personal trauma after being involved in a racing accident that killed his friend and fellow rider Mike Venezia in the late 1980s. He's enjoying watching his children's success in the saddle, along with now being a grandfather of seven.

Continued On Page 30

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# Union Avenue —

■ Continued from page 29

"I'm so proud," Davis said. "I was pretty good on the racetrack as a jock, but it looks like I'm better in the breeding shed. And I only had one mare. ... Those girls, they're doing great."

"Jackie, I can't give her any advice, I told her to stay off the rail on her here and she came up the rail with her and won. She's won three on Vallelujah and she's ridden the filly her whole life. Katie, she's a dream. I was so happy she's getting a little opportunity. She can ride really well. Super focused, matured and she pays attention. She really does. And horses run for her."

None of the success comes as a surprise.

"There used to be a bunch of guys that would come to the house riding four-wheelers and dirt bikes, they're ripping around and she's passing them, putting mud on them and we'd all come to a stop and she took her helmet off," Davis said. "The guys were like, 'that's a chick? We would have gave you \$100 if you bet me that was a chick. She was chewing me up and spitting me out.' ... We're very proud of them. They made history the other day, those two girls. They were 1-2, first time in history that sisters went 1-2 at Saratoga in 160 years. And one is a momma."

Ken Wheeler Jr.'s Kant Hurry Love, who won her stakes debut last time out at Belmont Park for



Tod Marks

A Saratoga winner last year, Kant Hurry Love looks for her second consecutive stakes triumph Friday.

David Duggan, breaks just to the outside of Vallelujah under McCarthy, with Dylan Davis aboard Temperamental to the inside of Vallelujah.

Kant Hurry Love edged Grannys Connection by a nose last time out in the Dancin Renee going 6 furlongs. She goes the same trip Friday, and is

4-for-10 with five placings at the distance.

"She had a nice work into the last race and a nice work coming into this race," Duggan said. "The pattern of training hasn't changed. She's found a

Continued On Page 31



## THREE OCTOBER BOOK 1 WINNERS IN FOUR DAYS

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# Union Avenue —

■ Continued from page 30

good rhythm with her. She's had enough time to recover after last race.

"I'm obviously concerned about Morley's horse (Grannys Connection). If Morley's horse gets loose on the lead. There doesn't appear to be a whole lot of speed to take them on. We're going to be tracking him, sitting a little close. You know, it's not like we won by 5 lengths and we can regress a length, we basically mugged Morley at the wire last time."

Betsy Blue comes in off a fourth in the Dancin Renee for trainer Linda Rice, who went into Week 5 of the meet tied with Chad Brown in trainer standings with 18 wins. Jose Lezcano rides from post one.

Grannys Connection saw her win streak end at four in the Dancing Renee. She's won four of six and gets the services of Javier Castellano for the first time in the Union Avenue from post two. Temperamental makes her first start off a \$45,000 claim Aug. 3 at Saratoga for trainer Rob Atras. Bank On Anna, a 2 3/4-length winner

of last year's Union Avenue, looks to end a four-race skid since for trainer Phil Serpe.

The Union Avenue goes as the fourth race at 2:52 p.m. and is one of two New York-bred stakes on Friday's card, which also features the rescheduled and redrawn Grade 2 Hall of Fame Stakes from last week.

A field of eight New York-breds were entered in the \$125,000 Evan Shipman Handicap going 1 mile, including 2021 New York-bred Horse of the Year and multiple state-bred champion Americanrevolution. Winner of the Grade 1 Cigar Mile Handicap in late 2021, the 5-year-old son of Constitution was winless in three starts last year but placed in the Grade 1 Jockey Club Gold Cup and Grade 2 Stephen Foster.

Bankit, a son of Central Banker with earnings of \$1,406,405, is back to defend his title in the Evan Shipman for trainer Steve Asmussen. The field also includes Haynesfield Stakes winner Dr Ardito, Lobsta, Sunday-swithsandy, Barese, Sheriff Bianco and Whittington Park.

The Evan Shipman goes as the ninth race at 5:44 p.m.



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# Plan B

## French raider eyes for another try as turf stakes returns for Friday

BY SEAN CLANCY

Jessica Jankerup balanced six rolls of borrowed Vetwrap and a bottle of rubbing alcohol from the handlebars of a borrowed bike Tuesday morning. The Swedish-born, French-based assistant had just plundered Tom Morley's barn before stopping between the barns of Charlton Baker and Joe Sharp to talk about the long, strange trip she's been on since arriving in Saratoga with Hall of Fame Stakes contender Ocean Vision.

"We're still here," she said.

Ocean Vision breezed at trainer Tim Donworth's base in Chantilly two weeks ago, boarded a plane, landed at John F. Kennedy Airport, arrived in Saratoga, trained a few

### HALL OF FAME STAKES PREVIEW

days and walked with eight rivals to the paddock for the National Museum of Racing Hall of Fame Stakes Friday afternoon. It had been clockwork. The 3-year-old son of U S Navy had trained well, eaten up every day and attracted world renowned Oisin Murphy to partner him in the Grade 2 stakes.

Then the clock broke.

Afternoon showers and thunderstorms postponed the mile stakes. Horses were tacked up, ready to roll and were sent into a holding pattern. In drenching rain, the seven colts and two geldings walked circles like they were doing time. Eventually, NYRA



Tod Marks

Manila winner More Than Looks seeks his third consecutive win.

officials canceled the remaining four races, trainers untacked their horses and they headed back to their respective barns strewn around the Saratoga backside. Ocean Vision had the longest walk, crossing Union Avenue and Fifth Avenue before settling back into

his stall at the quarantine barn by the Annex.

NYRA immediately rescheduled the Hall of Fame Stakes to a week later. With runners Saturday, Donworth hopped on his scheduled flight Fri-

Continued On Page 33

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or contact the Virginia Thoroughbred Association at 434-977-3716



# Hall of Fame —

■ Continued from page 32

day night, he'll miss his first Saratoga starter. Jockey Oisin Murphy rode the following day and went home. Trevor McCarthy picked up the ride on the four-time winner.

The \$500,000 stakes runs as the eighth race at 5:08 Friday.

"He was fine. In the parade ring, he's very professional, he knows his job," Jankerup said. "When we took the saddle off, he was like, 'This is it?' He was just wondering what was happening and why he didn't get to run. He's been practicing two times now, he's well prepared. He went home, had his dinner, great, everything back to normal."

Jankerup cantered Ocean Vision Saturday and McCarthy breezed him Sunday. JR Ranch's Irish-bred zipped a half mile in :49.65 on the Oklahoma turf.

"He needed a little bit of work," Jankerup said. "He worked good, very good. I was very happy, and he came back super, so happy, awesome. He's great, he loves his life, he's great travel wise. Some might have been a bit upset but he was fine."

Perhaps, the postponement will work in Ocean Vision's favor.

"I hope the rain doesn't come. It said we were going to get 20 mls of rain. I can't see it coming," Donworth said, obviously flunking as a meteorologist Aug. 3. "He wants fast ground. If the ground is fast, I think he's going to outrun his odds."

Ocean Vision is staying here, transferring from Donworth to Gustavo Delgado after the race. Jankerup would stay, too.



**Ocean Vision returns in Friday's rescheduled Hall of Fame Stakes.**

"I told Tim, 'You send them over and I'll take care of them,' " she said. "I think it's nice. I would like to stay here a little bit longer so I could get to know what you can do with horses, how you can train them and bring the good things with me. Two weeks is too short. I need to stay a bit longer to get the whole picture."

The original nine starters (favorite Nagirroc had scratched earlier) return for the second attempt. Trainers took different approaches to the audible.

Cherie DeVaux breezed favorite More Than Looks an easy half mile in :49.90 on the Oklahoma dirt Sunday. The three-time winner drew the same inside post in his pursuit of his third consecutive victory. John Velazquez keeps the call for Victory Racing Partners.

Chad Brown chose to breeze Carl Spackler over the Oklahoma turf Sunday.

**Continued On Page 34**

# LB

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SEPTEMBER 14 – OCTOBER 1

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Closes August 30  
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Includes \$75,000 from KTDF  
Two-Year-Olds  
1 Mile



### LOCUST GROVE (GIII)

Runs Saturday, September 16  
Closes August 30  
\$400,000  
Includes \$100,000 from KTDF  
Fillies & Mares, Three-Year-Olds & Up  
1 1/16 Miles



### POCAHONTAS (GIII)

*"Breeders' Cup Dirt Dozen"*  
Runs Saturday, September 16  
Closes August 30  
\$300,000  
Includes \$75,000 from KTDF  
Fillies, Two-Year-Olds  
1 Mile



### LOUISVILLE THOROUGHBRED SOCIETY

Runs Saturday, September 16  
Closes August 30  
\$300,000  
Includes \$50,000 from KTDF  
Three-Year-Olds & Up  
6 Furlongs



### OPEN MIND (Listed)

Runs Saturday, September 16  
Closes August 30  
\$300,000  
Includes \$50,000 from KTDF  
Fillies & Mares, Three-Year-Olds & Up  
6 Furlongs



### SENECA OVERNIGHT STAKES

Runs Saturday, September 23  
Closes September 6  
\$175,000  
Includes \$65,000 from KTDF  
Fillies, Three-Year-Olds  
1 1/16 Miles



### BOURBON TRAIL

Runs Saturday, September 23  
Closes September 6  
\$300,000  
Includes \$50,000 from KTDF  
Three-Year-Olds  
1 3/16 Miles



### HARRODS CREEK

Runs Saturday, September 23  
Closes September 6  
\$300,000  
Includes \$50,000 from KTDF  
Three-Year-Olds  
7 Furlongs



### DOGWOOD (GIII)

Runs Saturday, September 23  
Closes September 6  
\$300,000  
Includes \$50,000 from KTDF  
Fillies, Three-Year-Olds  
7 Furlongs



### ACK ACK (GIII)

*"Win and You're In Dirt Mile Division"*  
Runs Saturday, September 30  
Closes September 13  
\$400,000  
Includes \$100,000 from KTDF  
Three-Year-Olds & Up  
1 Mile



### LUKAS CLASSIC (GII)

Runs Saturday, September 30  
Closes September 13  
\$500,000  
Includes \$100,000 from KTDF  
Three-Year-Olds & Up  
1 1/8 Mile



### JEFFERSON CUP

Runs Saturday, September 30  
Closes September 13  
\$200,000  
Includes \$50,000 from KTDF  
Three-Year-Olds  
1 Mile (Turf)



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SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE KHRC



# Hall of Fame —

■ Continued from page 33

day. The Irish-bred son of Lope De Vega broke his maiden in February before finishing eighth in the Grade 2 American Turf in May. Tyler Galfalione rides for e Five Racing. Carl Spackler might have received the best break in posts, sliding from the 10 hole to the two spot.

Jack Sisterson allowed Behind Enemy Lines to rip a half mile over the Oklahoma dirt in :47.20 Saturday morning. It was the second fastest of 66 breezes that morning. Joel Rosario rides for Rockingham Ranch, Talla Racing and David Bernsen. Runner-up in the Penn Mile, the British-bred moved from post nine to three.

Brown opted to breeze Appraise Sunday morning. The Irish-bred son of Kodiak joined Hall of Fame starter Mischievous Angel through a half-mile exercise in :50.07 over the Oklahoma dirt. Flavien Prat takes the return call, fresh off an allowance win at Belmont Park July 8. The two-time winner moved from post three to five for Klaravich Stable.

British-based Charlie Appleby advised assistant



Tod Marks

**Mischievous Angel is 1-for-1 in his career for trainer Chad Brown.**

Chris Connett to send Mysterious Night through a routine half-mile breeze in :49.55 over the main track Sunday. Winner of the Grade 1 Summer Stakes at Woodbine last summer, the bay gelding slid over two spots from post eight to six. Junior Alvarado replaces Javier Castellano, who was originally on the three-time winner.

Mischievous Angel accompanied Appraise on the Oklahoma dirt Sunday. Owned by Peter Brant and Parkland Thoroughbreds, the son of Into Mischief won his debut at Belmont Park June 17 and makes the leap to stakes competition in just his second start. Manny Franco replaces the suspended Irad Ortiz Jr.

Shug McGaughey elected to bypass a breeze for General Jim after three consecutive breezes on the turf leading up to the scheduled running. The son of Into Mischief returns to the turf for the first time since finishing third behind Bat Flip in the Central Park at Aqueduct in November. Since then, the bay colt added two Grade 2 stakes scores before finishing sixth in the Grade 1 Woody Stephens in his most recent start. Luis Saez returns for Courtlandt Farm. General Jim moved

out two places, from six to eight. Todd Pletcher sent out Bat Flip for a half-mile breeze in :49.88 over the main track Sunday. Owned by Har-

rell Ventures and Starlight Racing, the son of Good Magic won his final two starts at 2 and makes his 3-year-old debut here. Castellano flips from Mysterious Night, replacing the suspended Jose Ortiz. Bat Flip took the worst of the postponement, veering from post two to nine.

Maryland Steeplechase Association congratulates James Wyatt and Jaidyn Shore, our 2022 and 2023 Jonathan Kiser Memorial Scholarship winners, who will make today's trophy presentation in the Jonathan Kiser Novice Hurdle race.



Maryland Steeplechase Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization which promotes the future of steeplechase by granting scholarships and funding education and racing opportunities for young riders. Should you wish to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Maryland Steeplechase Association or its dedicated Jonathan Kiser Memorial Fund, please call 410-245-6230 or mail a check to: Maryland Steeplechase Association, Inc., P.O. Box 1485, Brooklandville, MD 21022.



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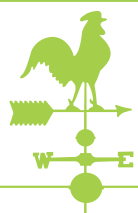
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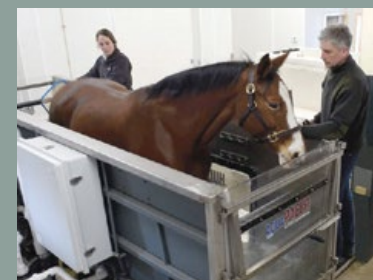
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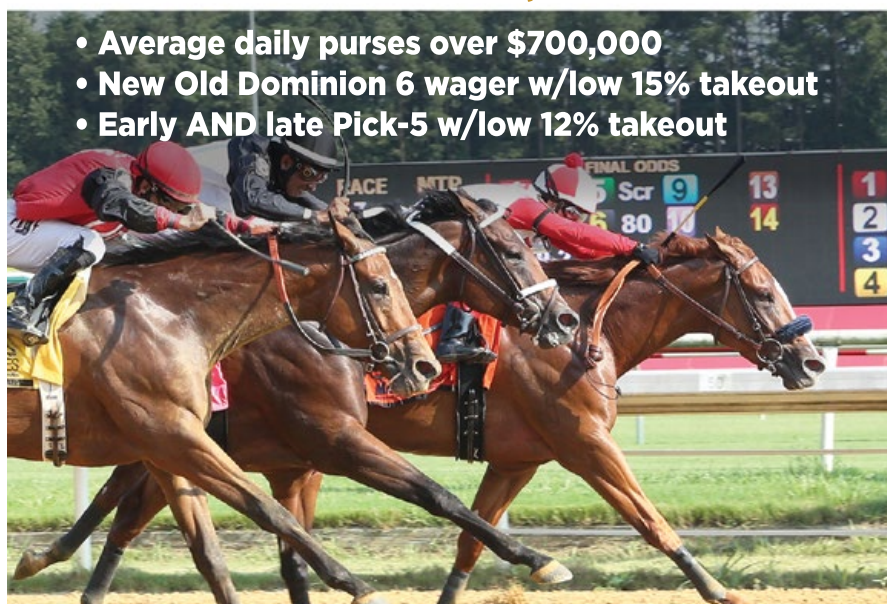


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# Saratoga: A Life Changer

**BY DOUG BLACK**

**GUEST COLUMN**

You never forget your first time at Saratoga. For me, it literally changed my life. It was Hopeful Stakes Day, Aug. 23, 1986. Clammy, dark and cool, the last day of the season. I'd hardly heard of Saratoga when, two weeks before, my brother suggested we go for the weekend.

"Sure," I said, "what goes on at Saratoga?"

I found out. If you're like me, you're drawn to an earlier time. Around 1900 feels like an ideal time to have been born. Some aspects of the first half of the 20th century I dearly wish I'd experienced. Train and ship travel. Theater, concerts and radio instead of endless amounts of television. Better architecture, music and clothes; less crowding, less traffic; less urban sprawl and more green space.

In sports I pine for the old ballparks such as Ebbets Field, home of the Brooklyn Dodgers, and the Polo Grounds, where the New York Giants (baseball and football) played. I've spent hours poring over photos of the old ballparks, with the stands close to the field, the overhanging balconies, the quirky dimensions, the atmosphere.

It was with this retrospective outlook that I came to Saratoga Race Course knowing nothing about the place or about horse racing.

What I saw was a shock, a thunderbolt. I was back at the Polo Grounds, or something like it. The antiquated grandstand with its overhanging clubhouse balcony. The big, green-roofed building behind the grandstand ringed with betting windows. The giant, heavy-leafed trees. The horses and jockeys walking through the crowd on their way to the paddock. And the horses – so magnificent as they bounced and danced out to the track.

There was a sense of freedom about the place, that this was a rules-free place, you could gamble and drink and no one said you couldn't.

You could move about freely, from

the paddock to the winner's circle and back to the grandstand, so different from other sports events where you're mostly confined to a seat.

The crowd was different, too. It wasn't the angry, hostile sports crowds I was used to. People were dressed presentably and behaved reasonably. They seemed energized and happy. There was chatter and laughter, a buzz and an expectant electricity.

As a race approached, you'd hear "two minutes" over the loudspeakers from track announcer Marshall Cassidy, and a pulse went through the crowd as bettors hurried to the windows. There was the rising roar of the crowd as the horses turned for home. There was the keen pleasure of a winning bet.

I walked out of there stunned, agog, besotted. Saratoga was from another age, something out of a more pleasant, better mannered, more civilized (and, I admit, idealized) past. It was adult summer camp and an open-air museum rolled into one. It was what I'd always been seeking from a sports venue.

That first day in Saratoga made me a lifelong racing fan. Over the following decades, my brother and I, with family and friends, came out to the Spa at least one weekend a year, an event we looked forward to all winter. But our visits included the misery of leaving. God, how I hated to leave. If, as Red Smith wrote, you get to Saratoga by going back in time 100 years, then leaving Saratoga and re-entering the present (it starts at the bottom of the Interstate-87 Exit 14 southbound on-ramp) was unpleasant and unwelcome.

Now, 37 years after that Hopeful Stakes, I live in Saratoga Springs. A freshly minted empty nester, I moved here last fall. I live on East Avenue a few minutes' walk from the Oklahoma Training Track and another minute or two to Union Avenue.

I don't have to leave. I get to stay.

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Tough couple of days at the Spa.

Intense scrutiny, increased attention, heightened awareness, unpredictable weather and three recent fatalities have created an uncomfortable cocktail of angst and agony for everyone. And I mean everyone. Owners, trainers, jockeys, breeders, bettors, writers, broadcasters, photographers, fans, agents, grooms, hotwalkers, international visitors, race-track management, you name it, are in turmoil.

The morning conversation, a once-proud forum about yesterday's champions, last evening's dinner, last night's shenanigans and today's potential has slipped into pleas and soapbox concerns for a once-proud game teetering on the brink.

Looking for a preview for the Hall of Fame Stakes, I wound up in a conversation with Clifford Barry, Jane Buchanan and Jonathan Smart outside Graham Motion's barn Tuesday morning. Lifers, all have played the sport from a geometry class of angles and all are dismayed. We discussed ideas, addressed problems, told tales of what we've seen and what we never want to see again. Nothing was accomplished, other than a little steam off the pot.

Write about it, Sean. I hear it all the time.

Here goes, today's backstretch whiteboard. We need dialogue.

Concentrate on the tangible and aim for improvement. We can make racing safer, we can't make it safe. We will never placate the radicals. Focus on the reasonable.

Invest in and improve training facilities. NYRA has done a herculean job on the Oklahoma turf courses, the widening and improving of the Oklahoma dirt surface and other upgrades at Saratoga. Seventeen men filled and tamped divots on the Oklahoma turf Tuesday afternoon. The renovations at Belmont are commendable. We need to keep improving facilities for horses. We have far too many horses galloping on too little dirt. Could NYRA buy/lease Greentree? How about just the use of the synthetic track? Renovate and open the Horse Haven training track, joggers go there, gallopers go to the other tracks. Create walking and jogging trails so horses can turn right again. Rip up the pavement. Invest in an on-site equine therapy center where horses can receive supervised care, a free hyperbaric chamber, salt-water cold spa visit, salt vapor session, whatever for every start.

# The Issues



## CUP OF COFFEE

By Sean Clancy

Breed to race. Even if you're breeding to sell, the approach needs to bend back to breeding to race. The home run has become the sales ring, which I get, but if the approach to get there leads to strikeouts later in the game, that's a mistake. Surely, we are breeding and raising our horses differently. Breeding for speed over soundness, overtaxing young horses to get to the sales, surgeries to strip and straighten and raising horses in overly controlled settings hurts the game in the long run.

Improve jockeys' mental health and racetrack safety. Ultimately, the jockeys are in control at the most critical time. We need jockeys hydrated. We need jockeys mentally stable. We need jockeys to ride straight and safely. I'm all for monitoring whip use, but counting strikes while horses crash into each other like amusement park rides should not be the priority.

Run fewer races per day. Is there enough time for proper track maintenance as we run more each day? Training hours meld straight into racing hours which now last longer into the night.

Be careful paying people to run.

Back in the day, they never ran turf sprints here because they said it would damage the turf too much. On Saturday, less than 24 hours after four races were canceled because of rain, seven turf

sprinters blitzed through fractions of :21.92, :45.19 and :57.29 on soft turf. Can the turf courses withstand this over a 40-day meet? I understand the needs of management and I understand the wants of horsemen, but we need to better balance short-term gain and long-term damage.

There is a disconnect between the organizations making and mandating rules and the people working with the horses every day. We need to decrease that disconnect. Right now, it's lab coats and microscopes on one side, dungarees and endoscopes on the other. Horses and horsemen are somewhere in the middle. Most racetrack vets are trying to do their jobs to the best of their ability and that's to take care of the horses. Nobody gets out when painted into a corner.

Uniform licensing practices and uniform medication rules for every state should be at the top of the to-do list.

Streamline the condition book and entry process. Hear me out. The demand for full fields ultimately leads to smaller fields. More races don't go than go in this country. At Saratoga Wednesday, entries will be taken for 12 book races and seven extras for Saturday. They'll run 12. At Colonial Downs Tuesday, they took entries for 12 book races and 11 extras. That's 23 races. They used 10. At Monmouth Park today, they take entries for 28 races. Not knowing when a horse is going to run is hurting the horse, certainly hurting the owner. Unless it's a stakes race, a horse rarely has a set target. This is not my idea. When we'd talk about training horses in the old days, Hall of Famer Allen Jerkens would listen, quietly, and then shout, "But you knew when the race was. Now, you never know when the race is, you can't train a horse without a target."

I'd take his word for it.

There are many more issues, many more questions, many more concerns but I'll finish here. Think about any or all. Add your own. Debate, discuss, but please don't disregard.

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