

Year 24 • No. 2

The *aratoga*

Friday, June 7, 2024

# Special

Belmont Stakes Racing Festival 2024

## Miss Kentucky

Oaks winner Thorpedo Anna  
powers strong group in Grade 1 Acorn

Friday Stakes Previews  
Entries & Handicapping  
The Grey Wizard prevails  
in Belmont Gold Cup  
Who won the last  
race at 'old' Belmont?



# BELIEVE BIG, MATE!

THE GREY  
WIZARD  
earns a  
**Golden Ticket**  
to **Australia's**  
**Melbourne Cup.**

*THE GREY WIZARD  
wins Thursday's two-mile  
\$250,000 Belmont Gold Cup-G2  
for Eclipse Thoroughbred  
Partners and the Estate  
of Albert Frassetto*



© CHELSEA DURAND/COGLIANESE

To learn about Eclipse racing partnerships, contact:

Aron Wellman  
(310) 968-9559  
Aron@eclipsepartners.com

Jack Sadler  
(803) 920-9005  
Jack@eclipsepartners.com

Sean Tugel  
(859) 940-0456  
Sean@eclipsepartners.com

[eclipsepartners.com](http://eclipsepartners.com)

[f /eclipsebp](https://www.facebook.com/eclipsebp) [t @eclipsebp](https://twitter.com/eclipsebp)

# Here&There...in Saratoga

Quips, Quotes, Names, Numbers & Notes found along the way

## By The Numbers

**15:** Maryland-breds to win at least one open stakes this year, the same total achieved in all of 2023.

## License Plates of the Day

CURLIN, Massachusetts.  
TWINNING, New York.

## Brother Act

Half-brothers Script (by Algorithms) and Aleah Aleah (by Mastery) run in today's fifth and sixth races, respectively. Bred by Stone Farm, which still owns Script, they're out of the First Samurai mare Dilly.

## Worth Repeating

"You can do a mile track in a blink of an eye. One day, I said I was going to run Belmont to lose weight. I got to the back side and said 'Kendrick, what are you doing?' It took forever to get around there. That won't change, but it will be a different place."

**Jockey Kendrick Carmouche, on navigating the 1 1/2-mile Belmont Park (on foot)**

"I love a good fight. Not literally, I did that too much when I was a kid in Louisiana. I love riding races and competing."

**Carmouche, who rode his first winner in 2000 and is up to 3,859 lifetime wins**

"Seven days a week. 367 days a year."

**Backstretch worker, with a smile on his face, Wednesday morning**

"I see you're not running anymore."

**Tom Amello to Tom Law. Ouch.**

"Met her? I hired her."

**Tom Law, asked if he had met Lizzy Madden**

"We've got some nice horses here."

**Erma Scott about Bill Mott's stable**

"I'm going to be leading trainer at 1 o'clock this afternoon."

**Trainer Jennifer Paragallo before sending out Fire Baron in the first race Thursday. He finished third.**

"Getting the real story now."

**Bill Mott to Sean Clancy and Roger Horgan as they chatted Thursday morning**



Tod Marks

**The Opener.** The field heads through the lane early in Thursday's first race, the earliest race in the history of Saratoga Race Course. **Drunk on Sake** (black blinkers, red shadow roll) picked up the win.

## Names of the Day

**Big Night Out, third race.** The 4-year-old filly, bred and named by Ann Backer of Smitten Farm, is by Into Mischief out of Blind Date.

**Pirate, sixth race.** The 3-year-old colt, named by breeder Peter Blum, is by Omaha Beach out of Treasure.

**Marceau, sixth race.** The 3-year-old colt is out of Charade and named for French mime Marcel Marceau, who would have been an ace at charades.

**Future Is Now, ninth race.** The 4-year-old filly, named by owner/breeder Larry Johnson, is out of Past As Prelude.



The Saratoga  
**Special**  
thisishorseracing.com

259 East Avenue, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 12866.

ST Publishing, 364 Fair Hill Drive, Ste. F, Elkton, Md. 21921. (410) 392-5867.

2024 Belmont Stakes Racing Festival Editions June 6-8.

2024 Summer Editions: Wednesdays and Saturdays July 11-Aug. 31.

Plus Opening Day July 11 & Sales Week Daily Aug. 2-7.

All editions in print and online.

## Editors/Publishers/Owners:

**Sean Clancy:** (302) 545-7713. sean@thisishorseracing.com ♦ **Joe Clancy:** (302) 545-4424. joe@thisishorseracing.com

**Managing Editor:** Tom Law: (859) 396-9407. tom@thisishorseracing.com

**Writers:** Paul Halloran, Alec DiConza, Spencer Ripchik, Lizzy Madden. **Photographers:** Tod Marks, Dave Harmon, Samantha Decker.

**Designer:** Ruthie Bowen. **Distribution:** Rob Whitlock, Craig Healy, Darby O'Brien. **Marketing:** Samantha Loud. **Social Media:** Melissa Bauer-Herzog.

**Handicappers:** Charles Bedard, Jessica Paquette, John Shapazian, Rob Whitlock.

The Saratoga Special, thisishorseracing.com, Thoroughbred Racing Calendar, New York Thoroughbred Breeders, Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred, The Horsemen's Journal and a whole lot more.

Call us about your editorial needs.

# Here&There...in Saratoga

Quips, Quotes, Names, Numbers & Notes found along the way

## Worth Repeating

"We don't know about the weather..."

**Trainer Mertkan Kantarmaci about the impending rain Wednesday morning**

"We started as a family, we didn't have owners. Later we picked up partners, owners. Amendola was one of them, he was making good claims and he found us that horse. He believed in us 100 percent, we have been with him since the beginning of '19 and we have never separated with the family, we are going on. His name is still on there, that's the point."

**Kantarmaci about Evvie Jets' owner Robert Amendola, who died in 2022**

"I knew he had the kick."

**Trainer Jerry Robb after Maryland shipper Studlydoright upset the Tremont Thursday**

"He was more mature this time. Today, he was focused. When he was in the gate, he was a little racy, but when he settled, I was really confident that we were going to get the job done."

**Jockey Xavier Perez about Studlydoright**

"I could do an ice cream column."

**Radio maven Steve Byk, contemplating a job offer from The Special**

"Phyllis told me if I didn't say hello for her then I shouldn't come home."

**Longtime reader Rob Griffo while scheduling a visit (for Phyllis, too!) to The Special Thursday**

"That looks like Mike Hushion."

**The Special's Sean Clancy as he watched the Mendelsohn Club of Albany sing at Saratoga Thursday**

"Oh, I'd pay money to see that."

**The Special's Tom Law, about former trainer Hushion being a member of the Mendelsohn Club of Albany**

"Where's the wire? Where's the wire? Where's the wire? There's the wire."

**Bettor cheering home the winner of the eighth race**

"Aussies everywhere."

**Valet Rodney Paine as the Australian announcer called the Belmont Gold Cup**

"What a way to blow off some steam. Go in debt."

**Fan walking home after the races Thursday**



Tod Marks

What's the Frequency? We're not sure how many channels The Grey Wizard gets on those blinkers, but At The Races with Steve Byk came in loud and clear on the way back from the Belmont Gold Cup win Thursday.

Read The Special at Home  
[thisishorseracing.com](http://thisishorseracing.com)

**TAPROOT BLOODSTOCK**

**Quality. Value. Integrity.**

A full-service bloodstock agency that stands on these words, and our results speak to it.

Contact Phil Hager at  
**859.509.9122**

[www.taprootbloodstock.com](http://www.taprootbloodstock.com)  
[phil@taprootbloodstock.com](mailto:phil@taprootbloodstock.com)

Award-winning sourdough pizza and full menu of fun healthy meals.

**Fun || Farm || Food**

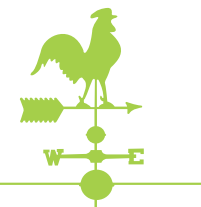
Local beer & wine

Breakfast, lunch, & dinner seven days

Healthy grab-and-go options

[www.pizzadelivery.farm](http://www.pizzadelivery.farm)

64 Excelsior Avenue • Saratoga Springs • Plenty of parking



**9 Miles East**

**"DEADLINE DINNER"**



THE NATION'S #1 HORA SALE!

# JULY SELECTED

HORSES OF RACING AGE



**NOMINATE NOW!**

MONDAY, JULY 8 LEXINGTON, KY

ENTRIES FOR MAIN CATALOGUE CLOSE **JUNE 14**

SUPPLEMENTAL ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL SALE TIME

[JulyHORA.fasigtipton.com](http://JulyHORA.fasigtipton.com)



# Parade of Stars

## Thorpedo Anna takes on Just F Y I in rematch of Gr. 1 Kentucky Oaks

BY TOM LAW

Kenny McPeek met Bill Mott on the path near the Fifth Avenue gap on the Oklahoma Training Track one morning last week.

The spot – not far from another revered place where the late Dr. David Richardson would hold court, opine about and discuss all of the latest industry issues – is frequently called “Mott’s corner.” That morning McPeek felt like he was calling the shots. And he called one.

“If I don’t run the colt I’m going to hand it to you,” McPeek said, the colt being Mystik Dan and it being today’s Grade 1, \$500,000 DK Horse Acorn Stakes. “Like he needs another Grade 1 in New York. We love Billy though.”

McPeek wound up deciding to run the colt in Saturday’s Belmont Stakes, leaving Kentucky Oaks winner Thorpedo Anna in the field for the Acorn and not against the boys. She’ll take on the Mott-trained Just F Y I, last year’s champion 2-year-old filly, Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Fillies winner and the same foe she topped by 4 3/4 lengths five weeks ago in the Oaks.

They’re two main players in the 9-furlong Acorn, but far from the only serious contenders of the eight 3-year-old fillies in the field.

Others in the field include Grade 2 Gulfstream Park Oaks winner Power Squeeze, Grade 2 Eight Belles winner My Mane Squeeze, Grade 3 Gazelle winner Where’s My Ring, Kentucky Oaks third Regulatory Risk and Grade 2 Black-Eyed Susan winner Gun Song.

McPeek remains confident, as ever, with Thorpedo Anna set for her third start of 2024 with back-to-back victories already on her resume. He showed much of the same confidence heading into the Oaks, when he warned the opposition that they “better have a bear because she’s a grizzly.”

“I fully expected her to win,” McPeek said last week after Thorpedo Anna breezed 5 furlongs on the Oklahoma Training Track in 1:02.09. “I was



Samantha Decker

Thorpedo Anna looks to add the Acorn to her wins in the Kentucky Oaks and Fantasy stakes this year.

going to be more disappointed if she got beat. Somebody asked how I could stay so calm. I just wanted her to win. I wasn’t thinking anything other than ‘just get there, just get there.’ I probably root more during a race when they come from way back.”

Thorpedo Anna, under regular pilot Brian Hernandez Jr., won the Oaks all the way on the lead, shrugging off a challenge from Just F Y I at the top of the stretch. The daughter of Fast Anna, the 8-5 morning-line favorite for the Acorn, splashed home well clear in the Oaks for owners Brookdale Racing Inc., Mark Edwards, Judy Hicks and Sherri McPeek’s Magdalena Racing. Thorpedo Anna now runs for Nader Alaali, Edwards, Hicks Magdalena. Just F Y I, making her second start of the year after a runner-up to Leslie’s Rose in the Ashland, finished 3 lengths clear of Regulatory Risk.

“The other one was better on the day,” Mott said. “I don’t know if that had to do with the condition of the racetrack, or if it would have evened out on a dry track. She’s good. She had two good works here.”

What type of track the fillies in the Acorn or any of the other runners on today’s card that includes three other stakes on Day 2 of the Belmont Stakes Racing Festival depends on which weather forecast one believes. Heavy rains never materialized early Thursday and the Weather Channel forecast for today calls for a 50 percent chance of afternoon showers.

Todd Pletcher sends out the 5-1 third choice Leslie’s Rose, who tries to bounce back from a 13th-

place showing in the Kentucky Oaks on a track she didn’t favor in Louisville. Pletcher isn’t looking forward to any rain.

“She absolutely hated the slop and I had concerns about it,” Pletcher said. “She was training absolutely great every day we were there except I think the Tuesday before the Oaks, and we had a sloppy track. She was noticeably less aggressive and just didn’t seem to care for it. I was concerned about that but she had never had experience on a sloppy track so I was hoping maybe race scenario she could overcome it, but Irad (Ortiz Jr.) said she hated it the whole way.”

Leslie’s Rose won the Grade 1 Ashland under Ortiz by 3 lengths in her prior start, enough to make her the 7-1 fifth choice in Louisville. The daughter of Into Mischief won her first two starts before a somewhat troubled third in the Grade 2 Davona Dale this winter at Gulfstream Park.

“She’s a filly that’s always trained really well, she ran great in her first two starts, she got in a little bit of a tricky trip in the Davona Dale and then she got a great trip in the Ashland,” Pletcher said. “If she can regain that form, and the way she’s been training she acts like she can, she should be very competitive.”

Where’s My Ring shipped from Southern California to win the 9-furlong Gazelle at Aqueduct in early April to lock in her spot in the Kentucky Oaks. The daughter of Twirling Candy finished 10th, beaten 18 1/4 lengths at 11-1, and tries to

*Continued on Page 8*

*Welcome  
to the*  
**NY-BRED**  
*Place to Be!*

**New York Showcase Day**  
Sunday, June 9



During the Belmont Stakes Racing Festival, NY-breds will run for more than \$1,000,000 in restricted purse money, featuring six NY-bred stakes on Sunday's New York Showcase Day card.



ADAM COGLIANESE ©



*Learn what it's like to  
breed, own and race  
a registered*

**NY-BRED**

For the first time ever,  
the New York Showcase is being  
held the day after the Belmont Stakes, at Saratoga.

*Join us as local horses make history at the Spa!*



**NYBREDS.COM**  
NEW YORK THOROUGHBRED BREEDING & DEVELOPMENT FUND

VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR CALL 518.388.0174

# Acorn -

■ Continued from page 6

rebound with new jockey Tyler Gaffalione for trainer Val Brinkerhoff. She's the 8-1 fourth choice.

Regulatory Risk, runner-up in the Gazelle and third in the Oaks, also tries the top two again at 12-1 for jockey Jose Ortiz and trainer Chad Brown. Gun Song put it together for trainer Mark Hennig and jockey John Velazquez in the Black-Eyed Susan, tracking the early pace and taking control late. The daughter of Gun Runner returns in three weeks and is 12-1 on the early line.

My Mane Squeeze gave owner and breeder William "Buck" Butler reason to dream big this winter at Aqueduct, rattling off back-to-back victories against fellow New York-breds. The daughter of Audible shipped to Oaklawn Park and finished eighth after trouble before and at the start. Trained by Mike Maker, My Mane Squeeze returned to win the Grade 2 Eight Belles, a victory Butler called his biggest win. The Acorn would top the 7-furlong Eight Belles.

"That's what we want, the Acorn," Butler said. "Look at her, the way she runs, it seems like (the two turns of the Acorn)

that's the way she runs."

Luis Saez returns aboard My Mane Squeeze, who is 12-1 on the morning line.

Power Squeeze, who rattled off three straight wins in Florida this winter including the Gulfstream Park Oaks, finished sixth in the Kentucky Oaks for trainer Jorge Delgado. Javier Castellano replaces Daniel Centeno on the daughter of Union Rags, who is 12-1 on the line.

Grade 3 winner Becky's Joker was also entered but ran in Thursday's Jersey Girl.

The Acorn goes as the finale of the 12-race card with post time set for 6:40 p.m.



Tod Marks

New York-bred My Mane Squeeze looks for her fourth win this year.



Samantha Decker

Just FYI is part of a deep field in the Acorn.

THE ONLY SIRE  
IN OVER A  
CENTURY  
TO SIRE

4 BELMONT S. (G1)  
WINNERS

ESSENTIAL QUALITY (2021)  
TAPWRIT (2017)  
CREATOR (2016)  
TONALIST (2014)

TAPIT

\$185,000 LFSN RYAN NORTON (859) 771-2150 LAKOTA GIBSON (859) 797-7102

GAINESWAY



# RESOLUTE RACING



## ABOUT RESOLUTE FARM

Established in 2023, Resolute purchased the former Shadayid Stud property in Midway, Kentucky. We have over 850 acres of historically significant Kentucky bluegrass focused on housing our breeding and racing operations.



RIGHT: Owner John Stewart & Goodnight Olive

BELOW: GOOD MAGIC x PUCA



### RESOLUTE IS THE HOME TO:

**GOODNIGHT OLIVE:** Multiple graded stakes winner, 2x Breeders' Cup Champion in the filly and mare sprint, 2x Eclipse Champion

**PUCA:** Dam of KY Derby Winner MAGE and KY Derby hopeful, DORNOCH

**QUEEN CAROLINE:** Dam of FORTE

**PIZZA BIANCA:** 2021 Breeder's Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf Gr.1

**CARAVEL:** Multiple graded stakes winner and 2022 Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint Gr.1

**TOUCHING BEAUTY:** Dam of current Derby hopeful, JUST A TOUCH

**CHAMPAGNE:** Full Sister to European and Breeders Cup Turf Champion FOUND



FROM LEFT: Noel Murphy, Cristhian Inchaurrega, John Stewart, Chelsey Stone, and Jesus Sarmiento standing with Pink Dogwood & her 2024 colt by Frankel

Resolute Racing will be sponsoring the Gr. 1 Jaipur Stakes on Saturday, June 8th



Chelsey Stone  
Director of Breeding and Bloodstock  
Chelsey@ResRacing.com

Like us on Facebook and follow us at:  
Instagram: @resoluteracingky | @resolutefarmky  
X: @rresoluteracing  
Facebook: Resolute Farm & Racing

# Surface Watch

## Didia's connections hope for firm ground

BY TOM LAW

Ignacio Correas scuffed at the grass-weed-dirt patch inside a walking ring behind D. Wayne Lukas' usual barn on the Oklahoma Training Track, kicking up a plume of dust and offered a take on what he'd like to see today.

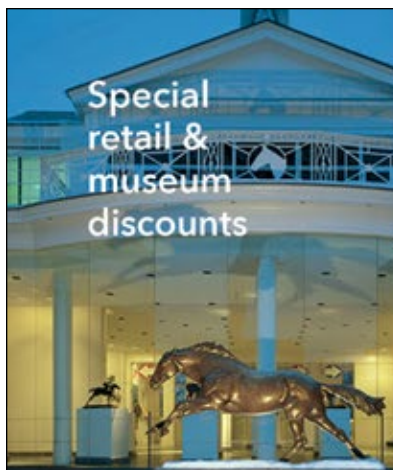
"Like this," Correas said while Didia, a major player in the Grade 1 New York Stakes, took turn after turn on the ring. "I'd like it extremely firm. If they ran it down Union Avenue that would be fine

*Continued on Page 12*



Tod Marks

Didia seeks her first Grade 1 win in North America for Merriebelle Stable and Resolute Racing.



Special retail & museum discounts

FREE subscriptions

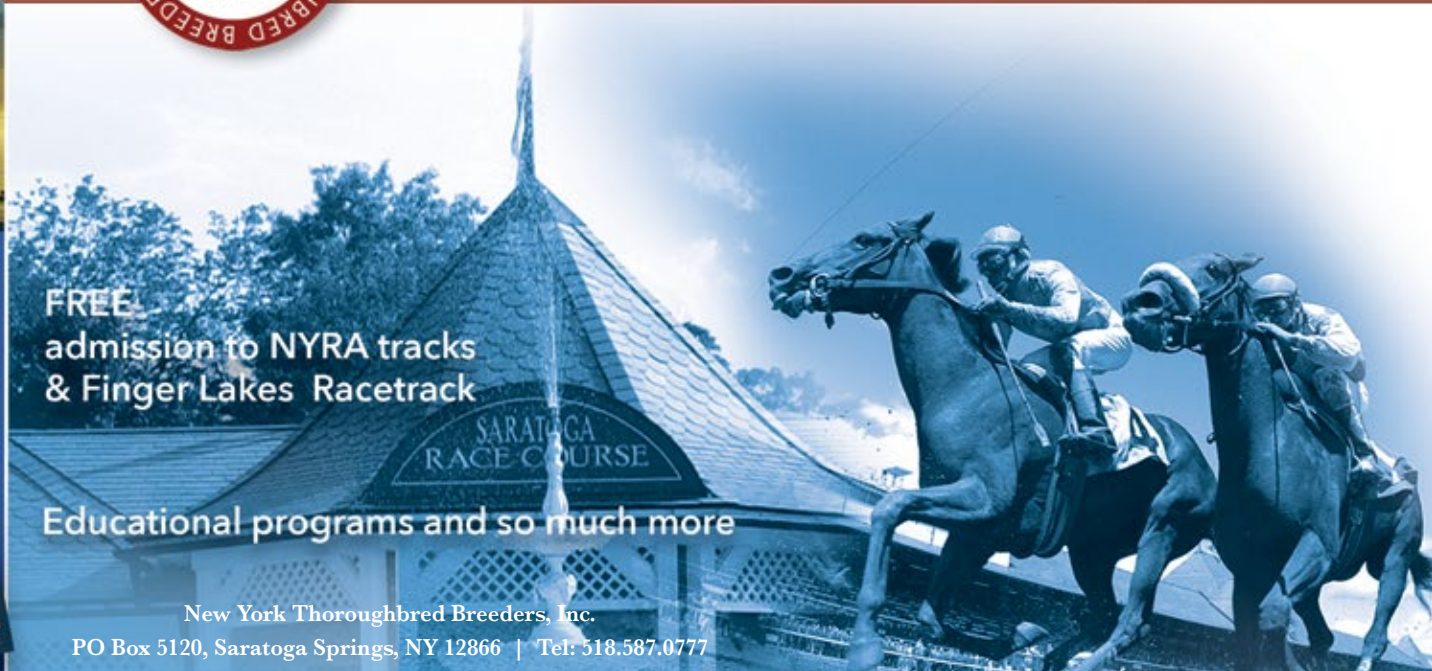


The New York Thoroughbred Breeders, Inc. proudly represents members of the New York breeding & racing community and welcomes new individuals to join by visiting [nytbreeders.org](http://nytbreeders.org).

FREE admission to NYRA tracks & Finger Lakes Racetrack

Educational programs and so much more

New York Thoroughbred Breeders, Inc.  
PO Box 5120, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 | Tel: 518.587.0777



# MEMORIES THAT LAST A LIFETIME

*“As Centennial partners, we experience the thrills of racing with a great team and wonderful people.”*

– Peter Horvitz, Margaret O’Meara,  
and the Horvitz family  
PARTNERS SINCE 1988

*“Why do we invest in every Centennial horse? We trust the team to allow us and a small group of like-minded partners to actively participate with a chance for a thrill of a lifetime!”*

– Jeff and Diane Campbell  
PARTNERS SINCE 2017

*“Centennial Farms....racing with integrity. Transforming dreams into reality.”*

– Tom and Kathleen Carr  
PARTNERS SINCE 2018

*“Really, really great experience. Precisely why I signed up with you guys. A+ ”*

– Kevin Nelson,  
PARTNER SINCE 2022

2024 Graded Stakes Winner ANTIQUARIAN ►



*Exciting Group of Two-Year-Olds Currently Available*  
Thoroughbred Partnerships For Over 40 Years  
Donald V. Little Jr., President (617) 816-0153 [centennialfarms.com](http://centennialfarms.com)





A Saratoga Tradition  
Since 1978  
Classic & Unique  
Souvenirs, Sportswear,  
Local Products, Gifts  
& More



Belmont at Saratoga  
Merchandise



368 Broadway 518-587-0666  
ImpressionsSaratoga.com

Check Our Social Media for  
Upset-the Mini Dark Horse's  
Calendar, Artists &  
Author Signings, Pop Ups  
& More



Carefully Curated Gifts,  
Garments, Decor and  
Memorabilia Celebrating  
Saratoga's Tradition as  
The Graveyard of  
Champions



445 Broadway 518-587-0689  
DarkHorseSaratoga.com



## New York -

■ Continued from page 10

with me. I wouldn't care."

Whether Correas – or anyone else in Saratoga for the Belmont Stakes Racing Festival – get their wish remains in the fickle hands of Mother Nature. Thursday's super-soaker threatened and fretted about all week but never really materialized and the going on the Mellon Turf Course stayed pretty firm. That's where multiple graded stakes winner Didia, shipping in from Correas' year-round base at Keeneland Race Course, will take on a deep field of fillies and mares in the co-featured 1 3/16-mile turf stakes.

"She likes it firm and her best races have been when it's firm," Correas said.

Didia, the 9-2 third choice behind Godolphin's English Rose and multiple Grade 1 winner and \$2,535,184-earner War Like Goddess, comes off a third in the Grade 1 Jenny Wiley April 13 at Keeneland. She hadn't been out in almost three months before that run, after winning the Grade 2 Pegasus World Cup Filly and Mare Turf in late January at Gulfstream Park.

A major player in the older female turf division with two graded stakes victories and a runner-up in the New York Stakes last year when it was run at Belmont Park, Didia ended 2023 with a 10th in the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Turf at Santa Anita Park. Correas circled a return trip to New York for the New York – whether it was run downstate or upstate – for Didia after the Breeders' Cup.

"I don't know what happened in the Breeders' Cup," Correas said of Didia's uncharacteristic back-of-the-pack run where she finished 4 1/4 lengths behind Inspirial but 10th of 12. "She'd never run like that. I don't know why (jockey Vincent Cheminaud) did that. I guess he got tricked because they went the first half in 46 and change. ... Then they put it to sleep really hard. I think they went 1:12 for the first three-quarters. For California that is slow. But she finished running that day. I wish it was a mile and three-eighths."

Correas frequently gives his leading runners the winter off, but opted for one more start with Didia in the Pegasus. The 6-year-old Argentinian-bred daughter of Orpen won that by a neck over Surprisingly, who is part of the deep field in the 1 3/16-mile New York.

"I map my year until this race, so far," he said. "Then depending on how she runs, it could be the Diana, the Beverly D. Most likely if you ask me again today, I'm going to end up in California again in the Rodeo Drive (in the fall). Hopefully on to the Breeders' Cup. Maybe we have a shot at the Pegasus again next year, then she goes to the breeding shed. I don't know what the idea is of the other partners."

Owned by Merriebelle Stables and Resolute Racing, Didia will be ridden again by Jose Ortiz in the New York.

Didia started her career in her native country, winning four of seven starts including a run of three straight before heading to the U.S. Off for more than seven months to



Samantha Decker

War Like Goddess tries to win for the 12th time for owner George Krikorian.

acclimate to the U.S. and American racing, Didia picked up where she left off and won four in a row before her runner-up finish to Marketsegmentation in the New York at Belmont Park.

Didia's victory in her first U.S. start – a 1 1/16-mile allowance-optional on the grass July 18, 2022 at Colonial Downs – showed Correas all he needed to know that she'd be top class.

"She always won wire-to-wire in Argentina. It's not the same running on the lead in Argentina or Chile. It's just not the same competition as here," Correas said while watching Didia train on the Oklahoma Training Track dirt course Wednesday morning. "So that first race I wanted her off the pace but covered. I told Cheminaud, 'you know what, you put at least one or two horses in front of you. I don't care how much you have to fight, this is a schooling race.'

"It was so unlucky, if you look at the splits, they went in 50 and change, and this poor guy was there (holding). ... At the quarter pole everybody started making their move and instead of being third, I'm fifth, sixth. And I said, now we're in trouble. Then she came to the leaders and pulled away. I don't know how she did it. That was the first hint that she was a freak."

Mark Casse holds Fev Rover, Canada's 2023 Horse of the Year and champion female turf horse, in similar regard. He said as much last year, lamenting that he might have the best – or one of the best – female turf horses in the country in his barn. That was before Fev Rover finished third, beaten just a half-length by Whitebeam and In Italian in the Grade 1 Diana in mid-July.

The 6-year-old Irish-bred mare returns in the New York off a six-month layoff. She finished 11th in the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Turf.

"When you have a horse like Fev Rover who has so many accomplishments there are very few options to run them in," Casse said. "It becomes, 'where is the best place to come back?' This is a tough race to come back in. She is training extremely well but I don't have a lot of options."

Tracy Farmer's Fev Rover spent time at Casse's train-

Continued on Page 14

# Unleashing THE POWER OF MIND CONTROL

O/O ROXIE FAST MOON

O/O EPONA'S DREAM

O/O JUDY'S CHANCE

## FIRST FOALS ARE

## COMMANDING ATTENTION

Red Oak Stable & Madaket Stable's

### MIND CONTROL

Stay Thirsty - Feel That Fire

An Irish Hill & Dutchess Views Stallions / Rockridge Stud / Waldorf Farm / Hidden Lake Farm venture

Standing at:  
**IRISH HILL &  
DUTCHESS VIEWS STALLIONS**  
Moe Scavullo (518) 398-5666  
Rick Burke (518) 584-1515  
Email: info@IHDVStallions.com

**ROCKRIDGE STUD**  
Lere Visagie (518) 851-6616  
Email: lere@rockridgestud.com  
Erin Robinson (859) 421-7531  
Email: erin@rockridgestud.com

**WALDORF FARM**  
Jerry Bilinski DVM (518) 461-8424  
Email: drbilinski@aol.com

**HIDDEN LAKE FARM**  
Chris Bernhard (914) 850-9769  
Email: cjbern@hotmail.com

**NYBREDS.COM**  
NEW YORK THOROUGHBRED BREEDING & DEVELOPMENT FUND  
2024 FEE: \$8,500 S&N

# New York -

■ Continued from page 12

ing center in Ocala this winter before returning to his Canadian string at Woodbine. She breezed nine times on Woodbine's Tapeta synthetic track in preparation for her run in the New York.

"I guess I could have possibly run her at Keeneland, but she wasn't ready," Casse said. "I try not to get to Woodbine until the main track opens in March. So, her training is kind of limited until Woodbine is up and going. I love training my turf horses on the synthetic track at Woodbine. Fev Rover is amazing. I can only train Fev Rover for a very short period of time over a dirt or she would start getting stiff all over."

Godolphin's English Rose, runner-up in the Jenny Wiley at Keeneland, is the 3-1 morning-line favorite for trainer Charlie Appleby. A group 2 winner in Dubai this winter, the 4-year-old daughter of Frankel will be ridden by William Buick.

George Krikorian's War Like Goddess, the 4-1 second choice, also re-



Samantha Decker

**Aspen Grove trains at Saratoga this week for trainer Jack Sistrerson.**

turns from a lengthy layoff. The 7-year-old daughter of English Channel finished seventh, beaten 4 lengths by Auguste Rodin, in last year's Breeders' Cup Turf at Santa Anita

Park for trainer Bill Mott. She's won three times in five starts at Saratoga, including the Grade 1 Flower Bowl in 2021 and Grade 2 Glens Falls in 2022.

McKulick also brings a successful record at Saratoga, with two wins and two seconds in four starts for trainer Chad Brown. Owned by Klaravich Stable, the 5-year-old Frankel mare won last year's Glens Falls over War Like Goddess and comes into the New York with two starts in 2024. She's 10-1 on the morning line, the same price for Irish shipper American Sonja for trainer Joseph O'Brien. Runner-up in last year's Grade 3 Saratoga Oaks, the 4-year-old daughter of Tasleet comes off a win in a Group 3 stakes at Longchamp in France last time out.

Last year's Grade 1 Belmont Oaks winner Aspen Grove, Grade 3 Beau-gay winner Neece Marie, 2022 P.G. Johnson winner Be Your Best, Grade 3 winner Surprisingly, Grade 2 winner Sparkle Blue and Royalty Interest and Star Fortress – the 1-2 finishers from the Grade 3 Sheepshead Bay May 3 at Aqueduct, complete the deep field.

The New York goes as the 11th of 12 races, with post time set for 6:05 p.m.

– Additional reporting  
by Hayley Morrison

*Mornings works*  
*Afternoon starting gates*  
*Anywhere around the world . . .*  
*We Have Your Back*

NEW YORK'S LEADING EQUINE INSURANCE AGENCY

SARATOGA RACETRACK, NY, AMO

**Hammertown Insurance Agency**  
*"Protecting Equine Investments"*

EQUINE FULL MORTALITY | STALLION INFERTILITY  
PROSPECTIVE FOAL | FARM PACKAGES  
LIVE FOAL CONVERSION | CLAIMING  
MEDICAL / SURGICAL | FALL OF THE HAMMER  
EQUINE LIABILITY (COMMERCIAL OR PRIVATE OWNER)  
TRANSIT & WORLDWIDE COVERAGE

HAMMERTOWN INSURANCE AGENCY LLC  
Contact: Anya Sheckley  
Tel/Text: 646-872-6843 | Fax: 518-691-9499  
info@hammertowninsurance.com  
189 Johnny Cake Hollow Rd. | PO Box 90  
Pine Plains, NY 12567



THE WORLD IS COMING.

ARE YOU?

NOV 1 & 2



DEL MAR

*A Breed Apart*

**TICKETS ARE ON SALE NOW**

Gear up for an experience of a lifetime, as the world's best thoroughbreds meet at Del Mar to claim their share of \$33 million in purses and awards. Take in all 14 Breeders' Cup World Championships races alongside Michelin-starred menus and a Pacific Coast cool only Del Mar can offer. Secure your tickets today before it's too late.



**TICKETS ARE GOING FAST**  
**BREEDERSCUP.COM/TICKETS**



# Jet Trip

Small stable takes another big swing with star turf mare

BY SEAN CLANCY

“Yes, of course, they know Evvie Jets.”

That’s how Mertkan Kantarmaci answered the question of whether they know his Grade 2 stakes winning mare in his home country of Turkey.

“She’s famous everywhere,” the 33-year-old trainer said. “She’s been making news on the Jockey Club TV. In the news, on the websites, all support and good news about us.”

They’ve had plenty to write about and talk about when it comes to the claim of Kantarmaci’s life. The seven-time winner lines up for the 25th time in today’s Grade 1 Just A Game Stakes, one of three Grade 1 stakes on pre-Belmont Stakes card. Kantarmaci filled out the slip and owner Robert Amendola ponied up the money to halter the daughter of Twirling Candy from an optional claimer at Belmont Park in September, 2021. Eligible for the allowance part of the condition, she was dangled for \$80,000 and Kantarmaci took a swing.

“Amendola was giving us a shot at the higher claiming prices. She wasn’t cheap, \$80,000, to be in the claiming game, not everybody does it. He was brave to do that. He told me he saw one good horse on the program,” Kantarmaci said. “We watched all her replays, and we made the decision to go see her. I liked her. I really liked her. She was all dappled, nice looking, sound walking, everything. I liked her size, not too high but a good wide filly. We were the single ticket for her.”



Tod Marks

Evvie Jets tries to duplicate her win over the course in last year’s Ballston Spa Stakes.

Jackpot.

Evvie Jets set the pace and just missed by a nose in the mile turf race that afternoon. A month later, she finished second again, beaten a head in a first-level allowance turf race at Belmont Park. She graduated from that condition two starts later before being put away for the winter. In 2022, she continued her ascent through the allowance ranks and notched a win in the Grade 3 Noble Damsel at Belmont at Aqueduct.

“I honest no. I honest no,” Kantarmaci said when asked if he thought she would reach stakes heights. “She showed me after she won the second

allowance with us, I was thinking about leveling up with her, she had that class, she was showing us what she could do.”

Evvie Jets opened last season with a win in the Plenty Of Grace in April. She added the Perfect Sting in June. And the Grade 2 Ballston Spa at 29-1 here last summer. A start later, she bolstered her form and her page with a third in the Grade 1 First Lady at Keeneland.

She started this season with an eighth in the Grade 2 Churchill Distaff Turf Mile May 4. With

*Continued on Page 18*

**SATURDAY MORNING SOCIAL-JUNE 8TH 9 A.M. TO 11 A.M.**



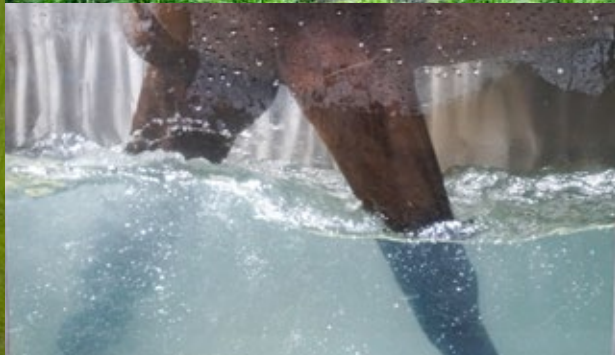
FREE ADMISSION,  
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS,  
HANDICAPPING...AND MORE!



SPONSORED BY  
GEORGE & SHARYN NEBLE,  
CHEVAUX RACING LLC

**THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF RACING AND HALL OF FAME**





Helping our clients,  
and their horses,  
succeed at the  
highest levels in racing.

Fair Hill Equine Therapy Center graduates  
include **91 individual G1 winners**  
of **136 G1 races**.

FAIR HILL EQUINE  
THERAPY CENTER

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy | AquaPacer | Dry Salt Room  
Cold Saltwater Spa | Vibration Therapy | Training Center



# BURKE EQUINE

Veterinary Care & Rehabilitation  
[burkeequinetherapy.com](http://burkeequinetherapy.com)



*"I've worked with Stowe Burke for years. He's a seasoned horseman and a veterinarian. This is a great combination to have at a rehabilitation center."*

– Hall of Fame trainer Todd Pletcher

POST-SURGICAL CARE.  
PRE-CONDITIONING VIA TRAINING TRACK.



ECB COLD SALTWATER SPA



AQUAPACER

STOWE BURKE, DVM

[stowe.burke@gmail.com](mailto:stowe.burke@gmail.com) | (518) 210-4322

Burke Equine is located 4 miles from Saratoga Race Course

## Just A Game -

■ Continued from page 16

earnings of \$696,608 for the stable, she has more than doubled Kantarmaci's next best horse, Jump For Joy.

"To win a Grade 3, to win a Grade 2 and to finish third in a Grade 1, of course, that was amazing. It's me and my family. It's great to make it in a different country after being here almost 10 years," Kantarmaci said. "I dreamed about having a nice barn but of course not stakes horses like her. Hopefully we can have more stakes horses like her. Let's see."

Evvie Jets has certainly helped the Kantarmaci family chase their dream. Tuncay Kantarmaci was a successful trainer in Turkey.

He bought horses at the Kentucky sales, campaigned them in Turkey and always dreamed of branching out to the U.S. He and his two sons, Mertkan and Illkay, began the quest in 2016 at Parx.

"Brave move. We run some American horses over there, so he was always telling me and my brother, 'We have done everything in this country already, you guys need to move up to the better level,' " Kantarmaci said. "We were lucky to handle it and step up for the family. I always followed the racing here, my brother moved first, and he told us that we can probably make it here. Then I came here, and my dad totally moved here, too. All three of us did everything. I was galloping, breezing, grooming, all of that. My brother was grooming. We were looking at the claims together, decide together and try to do the right thing for the horses."

They graduated from Parx after three years and have gradually built their New York stable to 24 horses. They've won 222 races over nine seasons.

Hey, make that 223, they won the opener with Drunk On Sake at Saratoga Thursday.

"It's very difficult because you have to go through the language, brand new rules, brand new racing, claiming, changing hands, going through too many people's hands," Kantarmaci said. "Not too many people go to a more difficult place. We are one of the few people moving up to that level. You usually leave the more difficult place to go to the easier one. We

had to do the big leap, the Champions League here."

Most of the barn is filled with claimers, hard-hitting, day-rate churning claimers. And then there's Evvie Jets, an overachieving mare who has given the Kantarmaci family a taste of the top.

"I had to make a good decision. If we really like her, we would drop the ticket. She taught me, we were leveling up with the cheap claiming horses, \$10,000, \$20,000, \$40,000... but she showed you could find some really good horses in decent claiming races," Kantarmaci said. "She hasn't changed, she changed our view, our eyes to target different races. We do the dirt for the winter, but our best horse came through the claiming as a turf horse. She taught us a lot of things can be changed."

The Kantarmaci family made the biggest change – swapping the security of a long-standing stable in their homeland for the dreamland of New York.

"Big time," Kantarmaci said. "Not everyone has that in their training life, there are many stories but ours is totally coming from a different place, making your own, small stable first and then go to that horse. Hopefully we can do that one more time, or many more times."

Owned by the Estate of Robert Amendola after his death in 2022, Evvie Jets drew post five in a field of seven. Dylan Davis, aboard Drunk On Sake, takes the riding assignment for the first time.

Evvie Jets faces a tough assignment in the 1-mile stakes as she squares off with a full house sent out by Chad Brown. Grade 1 stakes winners Beaute Cachee, Gina Romantica and Whitebeam lead the arsenal. Grade 2 winner Chili Flag and Grade 2-placed Coppice bolster it.

The only other runner is Mission Of Joy, a two-time Grade 3 stakes winner for Graham Motion.

...

### Hey Mertkan, do you miss Turkey?

"Some parts I miss. Some parts I don't. I miss the food. My friends. My family. The racing, sometimes I miss the racing, because you want to do what you grew up with. And my dad used to win so many races, so many good races. We slow down here; we win races but of course not the races that make noise in this country. It's OK, as long as we keep going like that, we're happy."

*Good Luck in the Belmont Stakes!*

# SEIZE THE GREY

**WINNER OF THE G1  
PREAKNESS STAKES**



**OWNER: MYRACEHORSE  
TRAINER: D WAYNE LUKAS  
JOCKEY: JAIMIE A TORRES  
BREEDER: JAMM LTD,**

**GRADUATE OF**



Photo by: Jim McCue

**BREAKING, TRAINING, PREPARING AND CARING FOR YOUR RACING THOROUGHBREDS**



**BREAKING  
RACE TRAINING  
LAYUPS  
FRESHENING  
FITNESS & THERAPY CENTER  
SALES PREPARATION**

5247 TEXAS HIGHWAY 19 SOUTH • SULPHUR SPRINGS, TEXAS 75482  
(903)485-8440 • WWW.HIGHLANDERTRAININGCENTER.COM



**WE ARE PROUD TO HAVE HAD SEIZE THE GREY WITH US  
FOR TURNOUT, FRESHENING, AQUATREAD AND TRAINING  
IN PREPARATION FOR HIS THREE-YEAR-OLD CAMPAIGN.**



Photos by: Jeff Hooper

# Easy Day

## Clement guides speedy mare Roses For Debra into turf sprint

BY JOE CLANCY

It's 10:20 Tuesday morning. Warm, not hot. Summer's coming. It's late in the morning, but early in the day. Christophe Clement trainees stand along the turn, tails against the Oklahoma training track rail. Bays of all shades, chestnuts, a single gray wait to go to work.

Some pair up and turn right to cross the track and head for the turf course with their trainer and his assistant/son Miguel. Others turn left and trot off the wrong way. The gray stands there – looking, listening, tongue pinched between her lips – until she's alone.

Finally, exercise rider Rafaele San-

### INTERCONTINENTAL STAKES PREVIEW

chez says, "Come on, mama. It's time to go."

The mare, multiple Grade 3 stakes winner Roses For Debra, waits for a smooch and a light kick or two, takes a puff of a breath, turns left and jogs off. She trots, OK maybe she canters a little, a mile right-handed – "jogging the wrong way" to American racetrackers. The exercise takes five minutes. Met by a groom at the gap afterward, Roses For Debra and Sanchez stroll the old Saratoga paths for a bit, pick some grass here and there and return to the barn about 10:45.

Pretty quiet day.



Tod Marks

Roses For Debra looks to remain undefeated at Saratoga in today's Intercontinental.

And all part of the plan for the 6-5 morning-line favorite in today's \$200,000 Intercontinental Stakes, the first of four consecutive stakes to close the 12-race card.

First post is 12:20 p.m., with the 5 1/2-furlong turf test slated for 4:55 as the ninth race.

"She's a sprinter with an enormous amount of life, a great amount of energy," said Clement. "It's her last week before the race so we don't do much. We just jog her once around the track, go for long walks, that kind of thing."

*Continued On Page 22*



Official Equipment  
Supplier of NTRA

We've been going  
the distance for  
over 180 years

As a partner to horse owners and the equine industry, we provide special equipment discounts for equine association members like you!

To learn more about the benefits to the industry, and how members of qualifying equine associations can save on John Deere equipment, call us at **866-678-4289**.

A percentage of every purchase puts money back into the equine industry to help further the bond between people, horses, and the land!

[JohnDeere.com/Equine](http://JohnDeere.com/Equine)



 JOHN DEERE

  
Thoroughbred  
AFTERCARE ALLIANCE

*Sharing Responsibility. Ensuring Accountability.*



Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance accredits, inspects, and awards grants to approved aftercare organizations to retrain, retire, and rehome Thoroughbreds using industry wide funding.



LEARN MORE

[thoroughbredaftercare.org](http://thoroughbredaftercare.org) • (859) 224-2756

Some restrictions apply. This offer is available to qualified equine associations members in the U.S. and Canada and is subject to change without notice. Cash savings offer not to be used with msrp discount program. John Deere's green and yellow color scheme, the leaping deer symbol and JOHN DEERE are trademarks of Deere & Company.

# SARATOGA ENTRIES

Friday, June 7

## 1ST (12:20PM). \$100,000, MSW, 3 YO'S & UP, 7F

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

1	.....1	.....Trulli Warrior.....	T. Gaffalione.....	T. Pletcher.....	7-2
2	.....2	.....Call Bob.....	T. McCarthy.....	E. Caramori.....	30-1
3	.....3	.....Pentathlon.....	J. Rosario.....	C. McGaughey III.....	12-1
4	.....4	.....Illuminare.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	T. Pletcher.....	4-1
5	.....5	.....Commander of Truth.....	M. Franco.....	C. Brown.....	9-2
6	.....6	.....Escondido.....	J. Velazquez.....	M. Hennig.....	8-1
7	.....7	.....Clever Mischief.....	F. Prat.....	C. Brown.....	4-1
8	.....8	.....Rolling Along.....	J. Castellano.....	J. Carroll.....	6-1
9	.....9	.....Itza Mirrakle.....	D. Davis.....	T. Morley.....	12-1
10	.....10	.....Mr. Papagiorgio.....	L. Saez.....	C. Martin.....	30-1

## 2ND (12:53PM). \$115,000, AOC \$62,500, 3 YO'S & UP, 11/4M

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

1	.....1	.....Arthur's Ride.....	J. Alvarado.....	W. Mott.....	3-1
2	.....2	.....Duke of Gloucester.....	T. Gaffalione.....	W. Potts.....	12-1
3	.....3	.....Rocco Strong.....	K. Carmouche.....	M. Giangiulio.....	15-1
4	.....4	.....Costa Terra.....	J. Lezcano.....	L. Rice.....	4-1
5	.....5	.....Leading Contender.....	F. Prat.....	C. Brown.....	5-2
6	.....6	.....Donegal Forever.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	T. Pletcher.....	9-2
7	.....7	.....Kerouac.....	L. Saez.....	N. Casse.....	30-1
8	.....8	.....Perform.....	D. Davis.....	C. McGaughey III.....	12-1
9	.....9	.....Tapit Shoes.....	L. Dettori.....	B. Cox.....	8-1

## 3RD (1:27PM). \$65,000, STR \$50,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 11/8M (INNER TURF)

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

1	.....1	.....Big Night Out.....	J. Ortiz.....	O. Barrera, III.....	12-1
2	.....2	.....My Friend Louie.....	T. Gaffalione.....	C. Murphy.....	12-1
3	.....3	.....Mr. Mendelsohn.....	D. Davis.....	J. Toscano, Jr.....	15-1
4	.....4	.....Victors Valiant.....	F. Prat.....	J. Abreu.....	9-2
5	.....5	.....Addicted to You.....	K. Carmouche.....	H. De Paz.....	8-1
6	.....6	.....Yo Daddy.....	J. Lezcano.....	L. Rice.....	5-1
7	.....7	.....Road Soda.....	J. Gomez.....	R. Rodriguez.....	30-1
8	.....8	.....Lord Flintshire.....	J. Castellano.....	K. Brion.....	6-1
9	.....9	.....Mo Rewards.....	L. Saez.....	M. Maker.....	5-2
10	.....10	.....Skellig Island.....	P. Lopez.....	P. Reynolds.....	20-1
11	.....11	.....American Grant.....	L. Luzzi.....	B. Brown.....	15-1
12	.....12	.....Sinful Dancer.....	T. McCarthy.....	D. Figueroa.....	30-1
13	.....AE	.....Collect From Ike.....	J. Castellano.....	J. Pregman, Jr.....	8-1
14	.....AE	.....Liar's Poker.....	J. Rosario.....	C. Clement.....	7-2
15	.....AE-MTO	.....Strapped.....	D. Davis.....	L. Rice.....	3-1
16	.....AE-MTO	.....Storming Chrome.....	T. McCarthy.....	H. De Paz.....	2-1

## 4TH (2:01PM). \$65,000, STR \$50,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 7F

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

1	.....1	.....G Munning.....	D. Grisaes Rave.....	C. Goberdhan.....	50-1
2	.....2	.....High Heat.....	D. Davis.....	O. Noda.....	15-1
3	.....3	.....Kant Beat the Rock.....	R. Vazquez.....	M. Kantarmaci.....	12-1
4	.....4	.....Notah.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	J. Terranova, II.....	9-2
5	.....5	.....Proven Hope.....	T. McCarthy.....	E. Barker.....	8-1
6	.....6	.....Own the Field.....	L. Saez.....	M. Maker.....	6-1
7	.....7	.....Boss Tweed.....	J. Alvarado.....	G. Contessa.....	15-1
8	.....8	.....Debate.....	J. Lezcano.....	L. Rice.....	3-1
9	.....9	.....Lucency.....	J. Gomez.....	R. Sells.....	7-2
10	.....10	.....Musical Maestro.....	J. Rosario.....	R. Rodriguez.....	20-1
11	.....11	.....Leftembehind.....	K. Davis.....	B. Tagg.....	10-1

## 5TH (2:36PM). \$115,000, AOC \$62,500, 3 YO'S & UP, 5 1/2F (TURF)

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

1	.....5	.....Secret Rules.....	J. Lezcano.....	L. Rice.....	20-1
1a	.....AE-MTO	.....Lost in Rome.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	L. Rice.....	20-1
2	.....1	.....Script.....	J. Velazquez.....	H. Motion.....	6-1
3	.....2	.....Clear the Air.....	T. Gaffalione.....	W. Walden.....	7-2
4	.....3	.....City Mischief.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	M. Casse.....	10-1
5	.....4	.....Boat's a Rockin.....	K. Carmouche.....	B. Kulp.....	8-1
6	.....6	.....Bring Me a Check.....	D. Davis.....	P. Reynolds.....	15-1
7	.....7	.....Run Curtis Run.....	L. Saez.....	M. Maker.....	10-1
8	.....8	.....Lark's Mischief.....	R. Vazquez.....	M. Maker.....	20-1
9	.....9	.....King Angelo.....	L. Rivera, Jr.....	D. Saul.....	20-1
10	.....10	.....Mischievous Angel.....	F. Prat.....	J. Abreu.....	4-1
11	.....11	.....Fluid Situation.....	J. Ortiz.....	J. Terranova, II.....	12-1
12	.....12	.....Senbei.....	M. Franco.....	C. Clement.....	6-1
13	.....AE	.....Ikigai.....	L. Luzzi.....	N. Follett.....	50-1
14	.....AE-MTO	.....Top Gunner.....	D. Davis.....	M. Kantarmaci.....	8-1
15	.....AE-MTO	.....Cees Get Degrees.....	E. Cancel.....	T. Morley.....	9-2

## 6TH (3:11PM). \$110,000, AOC \$80,000, 3 YO, 1M (INNER TURF)

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

1	.....1	.....Stolen Magic.....	J. Lezcano.....	L. Rice.....	5-1
2	.....2	.....Aleah Aleah.....	K. Carmouche.....	J. Ryerson.....	20-1
3	.....3	.....Hunt Ball.....	J. Alvarado.....	W. Mott.....	6-1
4	.....4	.....Time Song.....	J. Castellano.....	P. Gulyas.....	12-1
5	.....5	.....Vinsanity.....	L. Rivera.....	A. Arriaga.....	50-1
6	.....6	.....Spirit Prince.....	J. Rosario.....	C. Clement.....	7-2
7	.....7	.....Pirate.....	F. Prat.....	T. Pletcher.....	6-1
8	.....8	.....Marceau.....	D. Davis.....	B. Tagg.....	20-1
9	.....9	.....Army Officer.....	L. Dettori.....	B. Cox.....	9-2
10	.....10	.....Tifareeh.....	T. Gaffalione.....	B. Walsh.....	10-1
11	.....11	.....Sanderson.....	M. Franco.....	C. DeVaux.....	12-1
12	.....12	.....Indianquest.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	R. Falcone, Jr.....	15-1
13	.....AE	.....Ez Roll.....	T. McCarthy.....	T. Morley.....	20-1
14	.....AE-MTO	.....Top Conor.....	F. Prat.....	C. Brown.....	4-5
15	.....AE-MTO	.....Have You Heard.....	L. Saez.....	M. Maker.....	12-1
16	.....AE-MTO	.....Cool Operator.....	J. Lezcano.....	L. Rice.....	5-1

## 7TH (3:46PM). \$110,000, ALW, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M, 6F

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

1	.....1	.....Ziaerati.....	F. Prat.....	R. Falcone, Jr.....	15-1
2	.....2	.....Justthefactsjack.....	J. Castellano.....	B. Levine.....	8-1
3	.....3	.....Roswell.....	J. Alvarado.....	W. Mott.....	5-1
4	.....4	.....Munnys Gold.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	T. Pletcher.....	6-5
5	.....5	.....Kehoe Beach.....	J. Velazquez.....	W. Ward.....	12-1
6	.....6	.....Sugar Hi.....	T. Gaffalione.....	W. Mott.....	12-1
7	.....7	.....Little Linzee.....	R. Maragh.....	D. Schettino.....	30-1
8	.....8	.....Sam's Treasure.....	J. Rosario.....	W. Ward.....	8-1
9	.....9	.....Majestic Return.....	K. Carmouche.....	M. Giangiulio.....	20-1
10	.....10	.....Very Practical.....	L. Dettori.....	C. McGaughey III.....	20-1
11	.....11	.....Coolcalm Collected.....	D. Davis.....	T. Hills.....	10-1

## 8TH (4:21PM). \$110,000, ALW, 3 YO'S & UP, 6 1/2F

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

1	.....3	.....General Partner.....	M. Franco.....	C. Brown.....	5-2
1a	.....13	.....Contrary Thinking.....	J. Castellano.....	C. Brown.....	5-2
2	.....1	.....Printrack.....	R. Maragh.....	R. Rodriguez.....	12-1
3	.....2	.....Kunshan Bridge.....	F. Prat.....	M. Kantarmaci.....	20-1
4	.....4	.....Radio Red.....	D. Davis.....	D. Gargan.....	8-1
5	.....5	.....Mariachi.....	K. Carmouche.....	J. Kimmel.....	12-1
6	.....6	.....El Capi.....	J. Gomez.....	R. Dutrow, Jr.....	4-1
7	.....7	.....Be the Boss.....	L. Saez.....	M. Maker.....	12-1
8	.....8	.....Eliminate.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	T. Pletcher.....	15-1
9	.....9	.....Light Man.....	J. Ortiz.....	B. Levine.....	15-1
10	.....10	.....One Giant Leap.....	J. Velazquez.....	W. Ward.....	15-1
11	.....11	.....Sesame Seed Bagel.....	T. Gaffalione.....	L. Rice.....	20-1
12	.....12	.....Jefferson Street.....	J. Alvarado.....	W. Mott.....	5-1

Read The Special  
thisishorseracing.com

## SARATOGA ENTRIES

### 9TH (4:55PM). \$200,000, STK. THE INTERCONTINENTAL PRESENTED BY MTV SOLUTIONS.

4&UP, F&M, 5 1/2F (TURF). Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 4, Daily Double

1	.....1	.....Run for the Hills.....	J. Ortiz.....	M. Casse.....	12-1
2	.....2	.....Kaufmaker.....	L. Saez.....	W. Ward.....	10-1
3	.....3	.....Everyoneloveslinda.....	E. Cancel.....	L. Rice.....	30-1
4	.....4	.....Lady Milagro.....	L. Rivera, Jr.....	C. Martin.....	15-1
5	.....5	.....Future Is Now.....	P. Lopez.....	M. Trombetta.....	8-1
6	.....6	.....Roses for Debra.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	C. Clement.....	6-5
7	.....7	.....Medalla Match.....	B. Hernandez, Jr.....	C. DeVaux.....	15-1
8	.....8	.....Gal in a Rush.....	F. Prat.....	C. Clement.....	10-1
9	.....9	.....Spicybug.....	M. Franco.....	M. McCarthy.....	20-1
10	.....10	.....Love Reigns (IRE).....	J. Rosario.....	W. Ward.....	3-1

### 10TH (5:30PM). \$500,000, STK - THE JUST A GAME, 4 YO'S & UP, F & M, 1M (INNER TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Pic 3, Daily Double

1	.....1	.....Mission of Joy.....	J. Velazquez.....	H. Motion.....	12-1
2	.....2	.....Beaute Cachee (FR).....	M. Franco.....	C. Brown.....	6-1
3	.....3	.....Gina Romantica.....	T. Gaffalione.....	C. Brown.....	3-1
4	.....4	.....Coppice (GB).....	L. Dettori.....	C. Brown.....	3-1
5	.....5	.....Evvie Jets.....	D. Davis.....	M. Kantarnaci.....	15-1
6	.....6	.....Chili Flag (FR).....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	C. Brown.....	4-1
7	.....7	.....Whitebeam (GB).....	F. Prat.....	C. Brown.....	5-2

### 11TH (6:05PM). \$750,000, STK. THE NEW YORK PRESENTED BY RIVERS CASINO, 4&UP, F&M, 1 3/16M (TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Daily Double

1	.....1	.....McKulick (GB).....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	C. Brown.....	10-1
2	.....2	.....English Rose (IRE).....	W. Buick.....	C. Appleby.....	3-1
3	.....3	.....Didia (ARG).....	J. Ortiz.....	I. Correas, IV.....	9-2
4	.....4	.....Aspen Grove (IRE).....	T. Gaffalione.....	J. Sifersson.....	20-1
5	.....5	.....American Sonja (GB).....	L. Dettori.....	J. O'Brien.....	10-1
6	.....6	.....Fev Rover (IRE).....	J. Castellano.....	M. Casse.....	8-1
7	.....7	.....Necie Marie.....	J. Rosario.....	R. Reid, Jr.....	15-1
8	.....8	.....Be Your Best (IRE).....	K. Carmouche.....	H. De Paz.....	30-1
9	.....9	.....Sparkle Blue.....	J. Ruiz.....	H. Motion.....	15-1
10	.....10	.....War Like Goddess.....	J. Alvarado.....	W. Mott.....	4-1
11	.....11	.....Star Fortress (IRE).....	L. Saez.....	C. DeVaux.....	20-1
12	.....12	.....Royalty Interest (FR).....	E. Cancel.....	C. Brown.....	20-1
13	.....13	.....Surprisingly.....	F. Prat.....	T. Pletcher.....	15-1

### 12TH (6:40PM). \$500,000, STK - THE DK HORSE ACORN, 3 YO, F, 1 1/8M

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta

1	.....1	.....Becky's Joker.....	P. Lopez.....	G. Contessa.....	30-1
2	.....2	.....Power Squeeze.....	J. Castellano.....	J. Delgado.....	12-1
3	.....3	.....Leslie's Rose.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	T. Pletcher.....	5-1
4	.....4	.....Just F Y I.....	J. Alvarado.....	W. Mott.....	5-2
5	.....5	.....My Mane Squeeze.....	L. Saez.....	M. Maker.....	12-1
6	.....6	.....Where's My Ring.....	T. Gaffalione.....	V. Brinkerhoff.....	8-1
7	.....7	.....Regulatory Risk.....	J. Ortiz.....	C. Brown.....	12-1
8	.....8	.....Gun Song.....	J. Velazquez.....	M. Hennig.....	12-1
9	.....9	.....Thorpedo Anna.....	B. Hernandez, Jr.....	K. McPeck.....	8-5

Copyright 2024 EQUIBASE Company LLC. All Rights Reserved.



**SARATOGA REPORT**  
the Saratoga Region's **FREE** one-stop news aggregator and information source for local updates and NY horse racing news.

Visit our website or scan the QR Code for up-to-date information

[www.saratoga-report.com](http://www.saratoga-report.com)

## Intercontinental -

### Continued from page 20

Bred in Pennsylvania by Blackstone Farm, Roses For Debra crossed the finish line first in her first four starts (three in state-bred company and all at Presque Isle Downs in 2022) for owner John O'Meara and trainer Michelle Brafford. A disqualification to second for interference in her debut cost her a perfect record, but the success included the Malvern Rose Stakes and an open-company allowance in September. Fourth at Keeneland that October, the 5-year-old daughter of Liam's Map moved to Clement's barn for 2023 and went right back to winning when sent to Maryland for a two-other-than turf sprint last May.

"She trained very, very well last year," Clement said. "I ran her at Pimlico because I couldn't find a race in New York. I was pretty sure she was a nice horse."

Roses For Debra won a three other than at Belmont Park in July, then added the Grade 3 Caress early in the Saratoga meet. Everett Dobson, a regular at the Clement barn, bought into the mare after that and she responded with another stakes win in August's Smart And Fancy Stakes. With seven wins in nine lifetime starts, she went to Parx Racing and took on males in the Grade 3 Turf Monster in September. Sent off as the favorite, she finished third over a softened turf course and then checked in ninth in the Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint at Santa Anita in November.

"When she's right, she's very, very good," Clement said. "She was a bit unlucky last year when I ran her on that very soft turf at Parx. The Breeders' Cup at the end of the year may have been one race too many, I don't know."

Rested on a farm in Kentucky and then sent to Clement at Florida's Payson Park in February, Roses For Debra ousted 11 foes in the Grade 3 Giant's Causeway at Keeneland in April and meets nine rivals today from post six for jockey Irad Ortiz Jr.

"She was very impressive at Keeneland," said Clement, whose horses spill into two full barns at Saratoga every spring. "She came here, she's trained well. She will have to deal with the weather, but you know what

... let's have one issue every morning, one issue at a time. She looks great, she's dappled ..."

She's calm.

"This is very good for her. She'd be one who would jig-jog instead of walking. This is very, very good. She was a touch high two or three weeks ago and I told Miguel that we have to keep her OK, keep her calm."

Anything but that on the racetrack, Roses For Debra has won eight times and earned \$579,868. She'll have to deal with Love Reigns, 1 1/4 lengths behind the favorite when second in the Giant's Causeway. The Irish-bred 4-year-old has won three of seven for Stonestreet Stable and trainer Wesley Ward. Joel Rosario rides at 3-1 from post 10.

Clement also sends out Gal In A Rush, second in the License Fee Stakes at Aqueduct in May. She has won three, but seeks her first stakes win for West Point Thoroughbreds, Chris Larsen and Titledown Racing Stable. The 4-year-old Ghostzapper filly won on good turf here last summer and is 10-1 for Flavien Prat from post nine.

"She ran a very good race the other day," Clement said of the License Fee. "She was unlucky a little bit. It was a slow pace, and she came flying at the end. She's a very game filly, very honest. She's right. We'll try and see what happens."

Maryland-bred Future Is Now exits a win in Pimlico's 5-furlong The Very One Stakes May 17 for owner/breeder Larry Johnson and trainer Mike Trombetta. The daughter of Great Notion has won four of 10, including a Gulfstream Park allowance in February. Paco Lopez rides from post five at 8-1.

Run For The Hills (third) and Medalla Match (fourth) exit the Unbridled Sidney Stakes at Churchill Downs May 3. They couldn't handle Louisiana-bred speedster Ova Charged (who extended her winning streak to six at Evangeline Downs June 1) that day. Kaufmaker, Everyoneloveslinda, Lady Milagro and Spicybug complete the field of 10.

The Intercontinental was a 7-furlong race for its first eight runnings before moving to 6 furlongs in 2022 and shortened again because of Saratoga's configuration this year.

**EXPERT  
HANDICAPPING**  
Presented By...

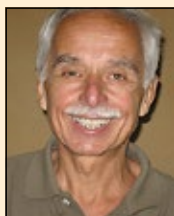
**Neighborhood**  
— KITCHEN —

MARKET • CATERING • TAKEOUT • DELIVERY



312 Rowland Street  
Ballston Spa  
(6 miles from the track)  
(518) 885-3100

The  
**POWER**  
Grid



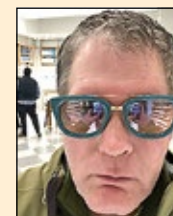
**John Shapazian**



**Charles Bedard**



**Tom Law**



**Rob Whitlock**



**Jessica Paquette**

Race	John Shapazian	Charles Bedard	Tom Law	Rob Whitlock	Jessica Paquette
<b>1</b>	Illuminare Rolling Along Clever Mischief	Illuminare Trulli Warrior Rolling Along	Illuminare Clever Mischief Rolling Along	Rolling Along Pentathlon Illuminare	Illuminare Pentathlon Clever Mischief
<b>2</b>	Arthur's Ride Tapit Shoes Leading Contender	Leading Contender Costa Terra Duke Of Gloucester	Perform Tapit Shoes Arthur's Ride	Leading Contender Perform Tapit Shoes	Tapit Shoes Arthur's Ride Duke Of Gloucester
<b>3</b>	Storming Chrome Yo Daddy Victors Valiant	Storming Chrome Yo Daddy Mo Rewards	Storming Chrome Liar's Poker Mo Rewards	Storming Chrome Lord Flintshire Victors Valiant	Lord Flintshire Yo Daddy Victors Valiant
<b>4</b>	Notah Lucency Debate	Kant Beat The Rock Lucency Debate	Debate Own The Field Notah	Debate Own The Field Notah	Notah Boss Tweed Own The Field
<b>5</b>	Lost In Rome Mischievous Angel Boat's a Rockin	Top Gunner Mischievous Angel Clear The Air	Cees Get Degrees Run Curtis Run Script	Lost In Rome Lark's Mischief Run Curtis Run	Script City Mischief Senbei
<b>6</b>	Top Conor Army Officer Spirit Prince	Army Officer Spirit Prince Pirate	Top Conor Spirit Prince Army Officer	Top Conor Hunt Ball Pirate	Hunt Ball Army Officer Tifareeh
<b>7</b>	Munnys Gold Kehoe Beach Roswell	Justthefactsjack Roswell Munnys Gold	Munnys Gold Roswell Kehoe Beach	Roswell Coolcalm Collected Munnys Gold	Very Practical Ziaerati Munnys Gold
<b>8</b>	Brown entry El Capi One Giant Leap	Eliminate Brown entry Printrack	General Partner El Capi Be The Boss	El Capi Jefferson Street Contrary Thinking	Contrary Thinking Jefferson Street Kunshan Bridge
<b>9</b>	Roses For Debra Love Reigns Gal In A Rush	Gal In A Rush Roses For Debra Future Is Now	Medalla Match Roses For Debra Love Reigns	Roses For Debra Love Reigns Future Is Now	Roses For Debra Run For The Hills Gal In A Rush
<b>10</b>	Gina Romantica Beaute Cachee Chili Flag	Gina Romantica Coppice Chili Flag	Whitebeam Chili Flag Evvie Jets	Chili Flag Beaute Cachee Coppice	Evvie Jets Mission Of Joy Coppice
<b>11</b>	English Rose American Sonja War Like Goddess	Didia American Sonja Be Your Best	Didia Fev Rover War Like Goddess	Fev Rover English Rose American Sonja	Didia Sparkle Blue English Rose
<b>12</b>	Thorpedo Anna Leslie's Rose Just F Y I	Just F Y I Thorpedo Anna Leslie's Rose	Thorpedo Anna Just F Y I Gun Song	Thorpedo Anna Leslie's Rose Gun Song	Just F Y I Gun Song Thorpedo Anna
<b>2024 Records</b>	<b>5/10</b>	<b>2/10</b>	<b>5/10</b>	<b>2/10</b>	<b>3/10</b>

# 2-Mile Magic

The Grey Wizard casts late spell in Gr. 2

BY TOM LAW

Who's ready for a trip to Australia?

The connections of The Grey Wizard can certainly entertain the idea, after the Irish-bred gelding got up in time to win Thursday's Grade 2 Belmont Gold Cup to finish off Opening Day of the Belmont Stakes Racing Festival at Saratoga Race Course. The Grey Wizard won a three-way photo with Champagne Juan and Limited Liability to capture the \$250,000 stakes going 2 miles on the turf, and picked up an automatic berth in the prestigious Melbourne Cup on the first Tuesday in November if his connections choose to partake.

Ask Graham Motion, who trains the Caravaggio gelding for the estate of Al Frassetto and Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners, and it's on the table.

"I love the concept. Ask me in October," Motion said. "I'm huge about international racing, I love this idea. It's a huge undertaking to do that, but it's nice to think about. It's tough to do, tough to get handicapped the right way, tough to do the shipping, quarantine, but this in an incentive. Love the idea."



Dave Harmon

From the outside, The Grey Wizard (left) charges into the fray late.



Tod Marks

The Grey Wizard (left) gets up in time to defeat Limited Liability and Champagne Juan (not in the photo, but to the right).

Brian Spearman, chairman of Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners, didn't seem hesitant before heading off to the Carmen Barrera Room for a celebratory champagne toast.

"What a cool horse, especially to be second last year and to come back and win it this year," Spearman said. "How cool is this, to be able to go to Melbourne? How ridiculously fun is that? And they have a little replica Melbourne Cup trophy. . . What a great promotion and a great horse. Super excited and so happy for the horse. Very cool horse. There aren't a lot of 2-mile races."

And what about John Velazquez, who has basically won everything there is to win in North America?

"I would love to go," he said. "That's one of the races I would love to ride. We got a free in, we've got to go now."

Spearman said the replica trophy, a smaller version of the real thing on display for fans who turned out Thursday, would rightfully go to the Frassetto family. Al Frassetto, a longtime owner and supporter of Motion, passed away May 20 at age 87.

"The amazing thing about this is Al Frassetto, he's so passionate about international racing," Motion said. "I wish Al was here. He would have loved this."

The Victoria Racing Club brought the Melbourne Cup to Saratoga for the first time, and more importantly offered the "Golden Ticket" automatic berth into the "Race that Stops a Nation" to the winner of the Belmont Gold Cup. Australian announcer Matt Hill called the 2-mile Gold Cup and like the paid crowd of 22,072, got a treat.

Longshot So High set the early pace ahead of Lucky Curlin, clicking past a half-mile in :48.96 and 6 furlongs in 1:13.94. The leaders were well clear of defending race winner and 3-5 favorite Siskany down the backstretch and around the far turn the first time.

John Velazquez was content to let The Grey Wizard lag at the back of the field, almost 20 lengths behind by the time So High ran past the finish post the second time.

"They were walking. I feel like they were walking in front of me, especially the first half-mile, I was like, 'Man, no one's putting pressure on them,'" Velazquez said. "From the three-sixteenths pole to the wire, I pushed Javier (Castellano on Six Minus) to go and Javier went, that put a little pressure on them, he forced Jose Lezcano (on Pioneering Spirit) and the other horses to go and then I sit behind

*Continued on Page 25*



# Gold Cup -

■ Continued from page 24

them. Then I think it's a good pace, instead of so, so slow, they picked it up and I thought I was in a good position, hopefully I could get out of there."

So High eventually shrugged off Lucky Curlin midway up the backstretch the second time, then retreated himself as Champagne Juan, Siskany and Limited Liability swallowed up the leader. Champagne Juan opened up midway on the far turn with Limited Liability and Siskany the closest pursuers. Velazquez advanced The Grey Wizard to sixth at that point, rolling past rivals on the outside.

"I was pretty confident back there," Velazquez said. "From the half-mile pole to the three-eighths pole, I was a little bit anxious because I didn't want to get stuck because he's such a big horse and I need some room to get out. I went to follow Javier and now Javier gets out, I was like, 'no.' He made me work a little harder than I wanted to, and he likes to lug in a little bit, too. Luckily, I had (the whip) in my left hand already and he responded."

Still sixth at the sixteenth pole, The Grey Wizard continued his advance just to the outside of Six Minus as Pioneering Spirit and Siskany sputtered and Champagne Juan and Limited Liability slugged it out up front. The Grey Wizard gobbled up ground in the final 50 yards, rolling past Champagne Juan and Limited Liability. The Grey Wizard got up by a head over Champagne Juan, with Limited Liability another head back in third. Siskany wound up seventh, beaten 20 1/4 lengths. The final time of 3:18.35 set a course record.

"I was a little nervous Johnny had to go wide here," Motion said. "I wasn't sure he'd won, but I'm never that confident."

Velazquez also had doubts at the eighth pole.

"Oh, to tell you the truth, I didn't know if I was getting there," he said. "I had to ride really hard to get there and finally I got close to them and thought, 'Oh, I got them.'"

The Grey Wizard, who improved to 4-for-15 in his career and picked up his first win since a 1 1/2-mile allowance April 27, 2023 at Keeneland, came into the Gold Cup off a ninth



NYRA Photo

Co-owner John Frassetto leads in The Grey Wizard after the Grade 2 victory.

in the Grade 2 Elkhorn at Keeneland and a third in the Grade 3 Louisville at Churchill Downs this spring.

Motion called the Elkhorn a head-scratcher, threw it out and ran The Grey Wizard back in the Louisville. He figured "more racing" was just what the "laid-back, 2-mile horse" needed.

Velazquez, who won on The Grey Wizard in that Keeneland allowance race and another 10-furlong allowance at Santa Anita Park in late January 2023, sensed something once he made it to the racetrack.

"Today I knew he was on, he was perfect warming up," Velazquez said. "He was on the muscle. Sometimes he's out there, through the motions basically. Today, I turned him loose and warmed him up, he felt good. When we broke, I (nudged) and he didn't want to go so I was like, 'You know what, I'll put him behind horses and wait until he lets me know.' Then I had to make a premature move before the wire to put pressure to them, because it felt like we were walking. The whole thing was to make the pace go faster, push and then get back and save ground."

Additional reporting  
by Sean Clancy.



## DELAWARE CERTIFIED THOROUGHBRED PROGRAM

DCTP

### DCTP RESTRICTED OPEN ALLOWANCES

- ① **THE PEACH BLOSSOM** – July 24, 2024 – *Fillies & Mares 3 and up – 7½ Furlongs (T)*
- ① **THE SUSSEX** – July 31, 2024 – *3 and up – 7½ Furlongs (T)*
- ① **THE LEWES** – August 21, 2024 – *Fillies & Mares 3 and up – 6 Furlongs*
- ① **THE STANTON** – August 21, 2024 – *3 year old and up – 6 Furlongs*
- ① **THE TAX FREE SHOPPING DISTAFF** – Sept. 18, 2024 – *Fillies & Mares 3 and up – 6 Furlongs*
- ① **THE NEW CASTLE** – Sept. 18, 2024 – *3 and up – 6 Furlongs*

### DELAWARE CERTIFIED RESTRICTED STAKES

- ① **THE BLUE HEN STAKES** – August 14, 2024 – *Fillies 2 year olds – 5½ Furlongs*
- ① **THE DOVER STAKES** – August 14, 2024 – *2 year olds – 5½ Furlongs*
- ① **THE SMALL WONDER STAKES** – Sept. 11, 2024 – *Fillies 2 year olds – 6 Furlongs*
- ① **THE FIRST STATE DASH STAKES** – Sept. 11, 2024 – *2 year olds – 6 Furlongs*

### OWNERS DAY STARTER ALLOWANCE

- **THE GEORGE ROSENBERGER MEMORIAL\*** – Str/Alw – Sept. 14, 2024 – *Fillies & Mares 3 & up, One Mile 1/16 (T)*
- **THE DTHA GOVERNORS DAY\*** – Str/Alw – Sept. 14, 2024 – *3 & up, One Mile & 70 yards*

\*Plus up to \$50,000 Bonus for any DCTP eligible horses that finish 1st, 2nd or 3rd

### IT PAY\$ TO RACE DELAWARE CERTIFIED

For more information on the Delaware Certified Thoroughbred Program or find out if your horse is DCTP eligible go to [dtha.com](http://dtha.com) and click on the DCTP link.



DELAWARE THOROUGHBRED HORSEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Founder and Proud Sponsor of the  
Delaware Certified Thoroughbred Program

302-994-2398 phone • 302-994-3392 fax

email: [dctp@dtha.com](mailto:dctp@dtha.com) • website: [www.dtha.com](http://www.dtha.com)

777 Delaware Park Blvd. • Wilmington, DE 19804

# Worth the Wait

## Almostgone Rocket captures Jersey Girl Stakes to kick off festival

BY PAUL HALLORAN

THURSDAY RACING RECAP

The philosophy of ‘patience is a virtue’ can be hard to practice when you own racehorses, though some are clearly in better position than others to stay the course. Count Frank Fletcher and Marshall Gramm among that group.

Fletcher and Gramm’s Ten Strike Racing paid \$250,000 for Almostgone Rocket at the 2022 Keeneland September yearling sale and let’s just say she wasn’t turning heads as she prepared for the races.

Ready to move on, they entered the filly in a 2-year-old sale, but she must have not been keen to leave and did a 180-degree turn in her training. No auction for her, and she was named accordingly, as Fletcher includes “Rocket” in the name of all his horses, after his beloved German Shepherds.

“We entered her for the sale, and then she picked it up and started working like dynamite. We ended up scratching her (from the sale),” Gramm said Thursday, after the filly

made their reconsideration look like a genius move, winning the \$145,500 Jersey Girl Stakes at Saratoga Race Course on the first day of the Belmont Stakes Racing Festival.

“We’d rather race horses,” Gramm said. “We sell yearlings, but generally we want to race them. We bought her to race, and so we decided not to sell her. And boy, it’s really turned out. She’s an interesting filly.”

Interesting and undefeated after a visually impressive 6-length victory, in which she sat off leader Gray Lightning, took the lead midway on the far turn and spurted away inside the eighth pole. The winning time for the 6-furlong stakes was 1:09.52.

“Three races, all three perfect trips. As a horse player, I would like to see her get punched in the mouth at some point to see if she can respond,” said Gramm, the 2020 Breeders’ Cup Betting Challenge winner. “I like to see if she can deal with adversity. But good horses often make their own trips,



Tod Marks

Maryland shipper Studlydoright wins the Tremont.



Tod Marks

Almostgone Rocket rolls to victory in Thursday’s Jersey Girl Stakes.

and hopefully she stays sound.”

It appears as if Almostgone Rocket will get her first real test in the Grade 1 Test Stakes on Whitney Day August 3.

“We’ll probably keep her around one turn,” trainer Brad Cox said. “She’s more a Test than an Alabama filly, for sure. The seven-eighths, the Test, would be a short-term goal.”

Flavien Prat rode the filly, who is out of the Jump Start mare Bound, with the confidence you might expect from a jockey on an odds-on favorite.

“The trip was good,” Prat said. “She broke a little bit out of the gate, but she got herself forwardly placed. I was traveling well all the way around and when it was time to make her move, she did. When I squeezed on her she responded really well. I knew it was going to take a good horse to run me down, and it didn’t happen.”

Cox appreciates the restraint showed by the owners.

“The ownership decided to keep her and I think it’s going to pay off well for them,” he said. “It was late summer (2023) and she was very close to running to make her debut, but she had a minor setback and we had to take our time and the ownership did right by her. She’s rewarded us in a big way.”

• When you have a 2-year-old that wins impressively on debut, a stakes race is often the logical next step, even if it comes with a degree of uncertainty.

“We expected him to win the first time,” Maryland trainer John “Jerry” Robb said in the Saratoga winner’s circle Thursday afternoon after his Studlydoright had unleashed a furious rally to win the Tremont, the first stakes race in the four-day Belmont at Saratoga festival. “When you have this much talent, there’s nowhere else to run. You come here and find out, just like everyone else in the race.”

By Nyquist out of the Curlin mare Peach of a Gal, Studlydoright came in off a 1 1/2-length maiden score in the slop at Laurel Park May 5. Robb said the colt only ran in earnest for the final furlong, which left him optimistic moving forward.

Jockey Xavier Perez expected and got a similar closing trip Thursday, sitting fifth of eight through a quarter-mile in :22.11 and a half in :45.28. He stayed inside on the turn and considered trying to come up the rail in the stretch, but when he sensed the frontrunners coming back to him – and odds-on favorite Touchy running

**Continued On Page 27**

# Thursday -

■ Continued from page 26

erratically – he came off the rail at the eighth pole.

Touchy blew the turn then came in several paths to confront Three Echoes, but while they were dueling, Perez galloped by both of them on the outside in the last 70 yards to win by 1 3/4 lengths.

“It set up exactly like I thought it would,” Robb said. “I just told (Perez) to save ground and wait to make a late run. I was hoping he was going to be third, and he jumped up and won.”

Perez loved the response.

“When I tipped him out in the stretch he gave me 200 percent,” said Perez, who has enjoyed marked success at Saratoga with limited opportunities, winning the Ballerina and Honorable Miss stakes in 2013 with Dance to Bristol and the Coronation Cup the prior year with Sensible Lady. “I couldn’t pull him up after the wire. He’s got a bright future ahead of him. If he stays sound and healthy, we’re going to have lot of fun with him.”

- Prior to Thursday, the biggest race Craig Steinhart had ever won as an owner was a \$16,000 claimer at Gulfstream Park. That’s a long way – figuratively and literally – from a \$150,000 stakes race at Saratoga.

Yet there was Steinhart celebrating in the Union Avenue winner’s circle after WhatintheLiteral led every step to win the Astoria Stakes for 2-year-old fillies.

“I thought she was going to get caught,” said Steinhart, who owns the horse in partnership with trainer and breeder Jena Antonucci. “She dug in. I didn’t think she’d be on the lead. She always breaks well and goes midpack. She just didn’t give it up.”

The daughter of Lord Nelson survived a grueling stretch duel with Steve Asmussen’s Aroaki and a steward’s inquiry after the two were in close quarters down the lane. But in the end, the team of Antonucci and jockey Javier Castellano were the winners, as they had been last year in the Travers here and the Belmont Stakes downstate.



Dave Harmon

Drunk On Sake wins the opener.



Dave Harmon

WhatintheLiteral (right) scores in the Astoria Stakes for owner Craig Steinhart and trainer Jena Antonucci.

“Why not?” Antonucci answered when asked about entering an 0-for-2 maiden in a Saratoga stakes. “Sometimes we overthink it. The stakes aren’t going to get any easier as they get older. She just missed at Keeneland (third by less than a length). If it wasn’t 4 1/2 (furlongs) she’s the winner there.”

This is the second ownership go-around for Steinhart, who is enjoying it appreciably more this time around.

“I owned a few in the 1980s and had a bad experience, then I met Jena a few years ago and it’s been a wonderful experience,” said Steinhart, a Florida resident who flew in from Fort Lauderdale Wednesday. “This is the first ‘nice’ horse we’ve had. To win something like this is mind-numbing.”

- The horses were loaded in the gate at 12:52 p.m. and when NYRA starter Hector Soler sprung the latch at 12:53, they were off and running at Saratoga – in June.

The official racing season won’t begin for another month – July 11, the 142-year anniversary of the earliest race in the calendar year in the track’s history – but with the Belmont Stakes Racing Festival moved north due to the rebuilding of Belmont Park, the earliest start date is now June 6.

Drunk On Sake, James Politano and S.O.K. Racing, Mertkan Kantarmaci and Dylan Davis will be the answers to the trivia questions of who were the winning horse, owner, trainer and jockey of the historic race. It was especially meaningful for Davis, a Saratoga Springs native.

“I’m really happy to be here a little earlier in the year,” he said. “I’m a home boy. I went to Saratoga Springs High School and it brings back memories. I met some old friends on Broadway the other night

and it was fun.”

The race turned out to be a laughter, with Davis taking Drunk On Sake to an easy lead that grew from a length after a half-mile to 8 1/4 lengths at the finish of the 1 1/16-mile maiden claimer on turf.

“I worked her a few days ago (June 2) in :46 and four and she took me around there,” said Davis.

Kantarmaci added blinkers after the gelding’s debut, a last-place finish in a maiden special weight at Aqueduct May 16.

“This is a special meet,” said Kantarmaci. “It’s a great feeling (to win the first race).”

- Trainer David Donk blew up the tote board in the eighth, a turf route for New York-bred maidens, when Teta’s Trotter outdueled favored Mission Hill in the stretch to win at 26-1. The Quaker Springs Equine homebred son of Flintshire was sixth after a half-mile before staging a gradual drive under Manny Franco that saw him take the lead just inside the eighth pole.

- Irad Ortiz Jr. was unseated from Ariana Rye at the gate prior to the fifth, causing a scratch and Ortiz off the rest of his mounts. He was taken to Saratoga Hospital for X-rays on his left ankle and foot. They were negative and he was cleared to ride today.

- NYRA announced attendance of 22,072. Attendance on the Thursday of Belmont week in 2022 was 2,822. Racing on Thursday last year was canceled due to the impact of the Canadian wildfires. Total all sources handle was \$18,168,565, a figure \$8 million above the previous day one Belmont Festival record set in 2017.

# New Belmont in the works

Timeless artifacts, memorabilia safely stored as project goes ahead

**BY PAUL HALLORAN**

When the Belmont Stakes returns downstate in 2026 after a highly anticipated two-year run at Saratoga Race Course, the third jewel of the Triple Crown will be run at a new, state-of-the-art facility that will look nothing like the venerable “Beautiful Belmont Park” built in 1905 and last renovated in 1968.

The building project at Belmont is well underway and on schedule, with demolition of the monstrous facility about 60 percent complete, according to Glen Kozak, vice president of facilities and racing surfaces for the New York Racing Association.

Kozak said demolition is expected to be completed in July, with foundation work starting in September on the new building, which will be less than a quarter of the size of the old Belmont (275,000 vs. 1.25 million square feet).

The Belmont Stakes is expected to return to Belmont in 2026.

Construction of the new building is being funded by a \$455 million loan from the state of New York to NYRA. The cost of additional work –

including the installation of four new racing surfaces, tunnels connecting the frontside and infield, and creation of acres of green space – will be borne by NYRA, to the tune of approximately \$100 million.

“This project reflects New York State’s support of horse racing now and in the future,” said Pat McKenna, NYRA vice president of communications. “In reality, this is an unprecedented investment in the future of Thoroughbred horse racing in America.”

When you have a 120-year-old facility with the storied history of Belmont Park – built by a group led by August Belmont II and William Whitney, former Secretary of the U.S. Navy – more than aesthetics comes into play. Belmont was rife with meaningful symbols, including: the wrought-iron gates that came from the old Jerome Park, the Japanese white pine and the Secretariat statue, both in the paddock, the magnificent mural by Pierre “Peb” Bellocq in the second floor of the clubhouse and Woody’s Corner, an area inside the clubhouse entrance paying homage to legendary trainer Woody Stephens,



Tod Marks

**The iconic white pine, which predates the track, and some other pieces of Belmont Park history will be part of the new facility.**

who won a record five consecutive Belmont Stakes from 1982-86.

Then there was the matter of two horses buried in the infield, Hall of Famer Ruffian, undefeated until she suffered fatal injuries in a match race with Foolish Pleasure in 1975; and Timely Writer, winner of the Hopeful and Champagne Stakes in 1981. Ruffian’s remains were sent to Claiborne Farm, where she was born, and Timely Writer’s went to Old Friends in Kentucky.

As for the artifacts and mementos, McKenna said the items were removed and safely stored prior to demolition. NYRA has not yet determined where they will reside in the new Belmont.

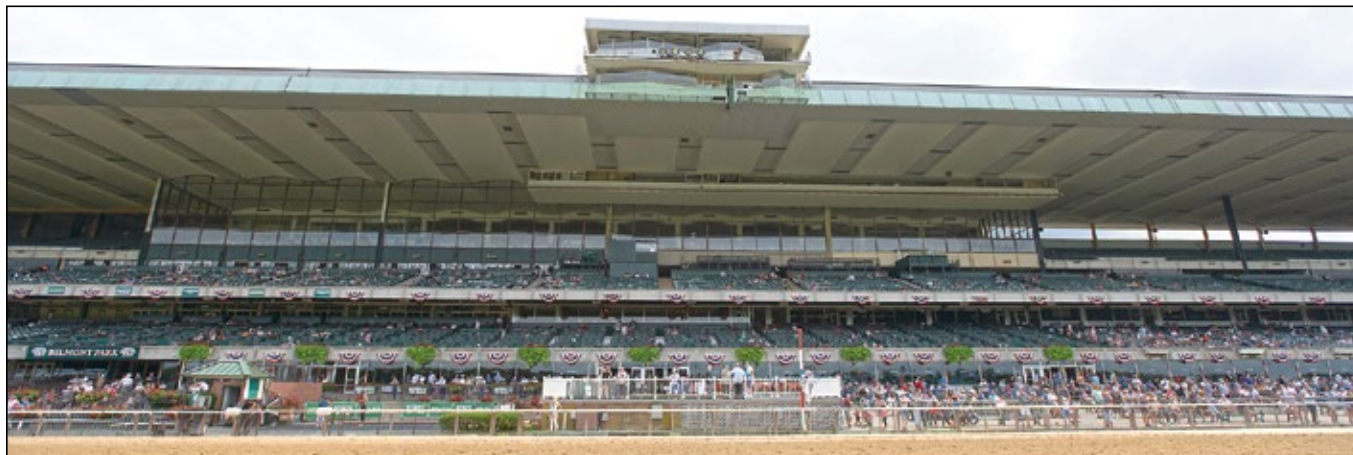
“Plans for the interior spaces haven’t been finalized,” he said.

Seems like Woody will have a Corner, location TBA.

The Japanese white pine, an iconic symbol that is part of the Belmont Park logo, predates the track itself. Kozak said “all steps are being taken to preserve it,” though the location and design of the new paddock may dictate the tree sitting outside of it. The Secretariat statue has been temporarily relocated to Saratoga.

The new Belmont will have seating for up to 8,000 people, with room for another 25,000 on the apron – using the 4 1/2 acres of green space created by having a building a fraction of the size – and more in the infield. Using a template employed by tracks that host large-scale events such as the Breeders’ Cup, NYRA will have the ability to stage temporary hospitality structures, allowing for a total capacity of at least 50,000 fans.

While a repeat of the record 120,000-plus people who watched Birdstone upset Smarty Jones’ Triple Crown bid in 2004 may not materialize, Belmont will have no problem accommodating the crowds that have become common at the Breeders’ Cup, such as 109,624 over two days at Santa Anita Park last year, or 85,824 at Keeneland Race Course in 2022.



Tod Marks

**The Belmont Park grandstand will be replaced by a smaller, more efficient building.**

**Continued On Page 29**

# Belmont -

■ Continued from page 28

Fans will also have access to the infield for the first time, thanks to a new tunnel system that has been installed. Four tunnels that were designed for different uses: pedestrian access, commercial vehicles such as tractors and one for horses to use to get out to the new synthetic track, the innermost of the four racing surfaces, Kozak said.

“We’ll never have to have heavy equipment go across the racing surfaces to get to the infield,” he said.

Fans arriving at the new Elmont station on the Long Island Railroad will be able to enter the track through the infield and, if they want to go to the frontside, use a 42-foot-wide pedestrian tunnel, according to Kozak.

The four new racing surfaces, from the outside in, will be a 1 1/2-mile dirt track, 1 1/4-mile Widener Turf Course, 1 1/8-mile inner turf and 1-mile synthetic track.

The work at Belmont will include the construction of three new dormitories that will house more than 300 backstretch workers. The first dorm is 70-percent complete, said Kozak, who noted these are in addition to two units NYRA built in the last several years.

There will be a 2,500-square-foot addition to the recreation hall, for a laundry facility and office space for the New York Thoroughbred Horsemen’s Association, the New York Racetrack Chaplaincy and Backstretch Employee Service Team.

The new building will be five stories, but close to the height of the old four-story building that had the press box level on the roof. A building that is significantly more compact, and with a glass façade, will provide fans with sweeping views of not only the racetrack, but also the paddock in the back.

“There will be very nice visuals for the fans,” Kozak said.

You might even say beautiful.



Tod Marks

The paddock’s Secretariat statue is in Saratoga for now.



**RIVERDEE STABLE & CLANCY BLOODSTOCK**

Sean Clancy 302-545-7713

[www.riverdeestable.com](http://www.riverdeestable.com) [sean@thisishorseracing.com](mailto:sean@thisishorseracing.com)

## Belmont Stakes Facts

**The Belmont Trophy:** The August Belmont Memorial Cup is a solid silver bowl and cover made by Tiffany & Co. It is 18 inches tall, 15 inches across and 14 inches at the base. Atop the cover is a silver figure of 1869 Belmont winner Fenian. The bowl is supported by three horses - Herod, Eclipse and Matchem - who represent the respective superior male-line descendants of the three foundation sires of Thoroughbreds: the Byerly Turk, the Darley Arabian and the Godolphin Barb. The trophy was presented by the Belmont family as a perpetual award for the Belmont Stakes in 1926. It was the trophy August Belmont received when Fenian won the third running and it had since remained with the Belmont family. The winning owner may keep the trophy for a year until the next Belmont winner is crowned. The winning owner, trainer, and jockey also receive a silver miniature of the August Belmont Memorial Cup.

# Last Run

Atras, Carmouche won final race in front of Belmont building

BY JOE CLANCY

If Hasbro ever gets around to releasing Trivial Pursuit: Horse Racing Edition, here's a question.

"Who won the final race in front of the Belmont Park grandstand built in the 1960s?"

In the words of Ben Stein, "Anyone? Anyone?"

The answer is Bold Honor, a Kentucky-bred son of Honor Code and the Limehouse mare Beautiful Bliss. Trained by Rob Atlas for Stud El Aguila and ridden by Kendrick Carmouche, the dark bay gelding rallied five wide to win a \$20,000 maiden claimer July 9, 2023. Thus far, it's the only victory on Bold Honor's 18-start career and its significance didn't register with anyone on hand that Sunday afternoon.

The moment won't rival Secretariat storming home by 31 lengths in the 1973 Belmont Stakes or make anyone forget Affirmed/Alydar. The moment wasn't even planned. The New York Racing Association wrapped up at Belmont in early July like normal, and headed north to Saratoga Race Course. The pace of construction on the new Belmont picked up speed over the summer and conversations about shifting the 2024 Belmont Stakes to Saratoga gained traction. Ultimately, the demolition timetable won out and work continued at Belmont while Aqueduct hosted the spring dates and Saratoga wound up with this week's four-day Belmont Stakes Racing Festival.

And Bold Honor unintentionally made history.

"I remember that race because we had a really good winter and kind of started off a little slow at that meet and I won a few races going into Saratoga," Atlas said. "That was one of them. We were



Coglianesse/NYRA Photo

**Bold Honor scores in the final race run in front of the Belmont Park building, which is being demolished as part of a reconstruction.**

starting to pick up momentum and then I went 1-for-30 or whatever (actually 1-for-33 but who's counting?) at Saratoga. That's the way racing goes sometimes.

"But I didn't think it was going to be the last race. Wow."

Carmouche answered a question with a question.

"What was the name of the horse?"

Bold Honor.

"Oh, I win a maiden claimer 20 on him – history," said the jockey. "It's not that he was or wasn't a really good horse or a superstar, we made some history together. You think about it now when you look back at it. I won the last race. I didn't know it was the last one when it happened, but I'm thinking

about it now. A lot of history happened in front of that building."

And some traffic has gone down Broadway.

That Belmont Park replaced "old" Belmont, which opened in 1905 and hosted its last race in 1962. During that construction project, all downstate racing moved to Aqueduct from 1963-67. The "new" Belmont opened in 1968 and stood like a brick and steel watchtower to Thoroughbred history. The names spur wonder – Forego, Exceller, John Henry, Shuvee, High Echelon, Ruffian, Bold Forbes, Arts And Letters, Tentam, Fappiano, Gulch, Chris Evert, Summer Guest and all the others right up and through modern-day heroes American Pharoah, Justify, Flightline and Cody's Wish.

*Continued on Page 31*

## YEARLING SELLER NOTICE

Yearling sellers may contribute to the NTRA's ¼% Check-off Program when selling with our sale company partners below. Your voluntary contribution equals \$2.50 for every \$1,000 of a yearling's sale price and helps fund the NTRA's federal legislative effort.

Participating sale companies are Keeneland, Fasig-Tipton, OBS, WTBOA and CTBA.



Visit [www.SupportHorseRacing.org](http://www.SupportHorseRacing.org) for more information or contact Joe Bacigalupo at [joeb@ntra.com](mailto:joeb@ntra.com).

HELP US  
HELP HORSE  
RACING  
IN DC.



# Bold Honor -

■ Continued from page 30

Now, it's a construction project. The building is being demolished to create another "new" Belmont Park. More history will be made, but nobody's in a hurry to forget the old stuff.

"I'm kind of a traditionalist," said Atras. "I love that grandstand, that facility, everything about it. My barn there is close to the track and the paddock and we would walk through the paddock almost every set and I'd always say, 'Look how beautiful this place is' not thinking they'd ever take it down. I have a lot of pictures on my phone of that place."

The trainer came to New York from Arkansas while working for Robertino Diodoro, and felt the impact immediately.

"It was like coming to the big leagues," he said. "All the people who've been there - it was nice to say Woody Stephens trained there, or Jerkens did, or Frankel did there. They went through that paddock. You can feel it there."



Coglianesse/NYRA Photo

The final winner's circle photo at the "old" Belmont Park.

Carmouche grew up in Louisiana and rode his first races there before building a career in the Mid-Atlantic with four consecutive riding titles at Parx Racing and five seasons of 200 wins or more. He rode five races at Belmont in 2007. Eight years later, he won one and became a regular on the New York circuit.

"I used to dream about being at Belmont Park when I was a kid," he said. "A lot of people before me won

big races there, Triple Crown races there. It's indescribable when you think about the impact of Belmont Park on horse racing. Being a jockey means more there."

Like Atras and plenty of others, Carmouche will miss the old building but also looks forward to the new facility - which will be the downstate home of New York racing complete

with a new building, outdoor areas, racing surfaces and more.

"It excites me," the jockey said. "It probably needed to be done, for going forward. Aqueduct is shutting down. They can bring the Breeders' Cup back to New York, there are a lot of things coming when you look forward."

Unlike his human partners, Bold Honor may never see the new Belmont facility. He went to Maryland a month after the Belmont win and was claimed for \$10,000 by trainer Annette Eubanks and Rising Sun Racing Stable. He finished second, beaten a half-length, at Laurel Park in March and was third twice after that. At Pimlico May 24, the 5-year-old finished fifth while in for \$10,000. He's earned \$48,462.

"He was a big, beautiful horse and we were hoping he would turn into something for us," said Atras. "He was a really, nice kind horse who showed some promise. He just didn't turn out the way we thought he would."

But he made some history.

Read The Special & more. [thisishorseracing.com](http://thisishorseracing.com)

## Enjoy locally owned, One With Life Organic Tequila!

## Now available at Siro's.



## One With Life is the official tequila of Hudson River Farms LLC.



# Making History

D. Wayne Lukas is back in the Triple Crown. And back in Saratoga. The 88-year-old Hall of Fame trainer upset the Preakness Stakes with Seize The Grey May 18. Owned by MyRacehorse and ridden by Jaime Torres, the son of Arrogate drew post 12 for the Belmont Stakes Saturday.

The Special's Sean Clancy chatted with Lukas Tuesday morning. Part One of this appeared in Thursday's edition.

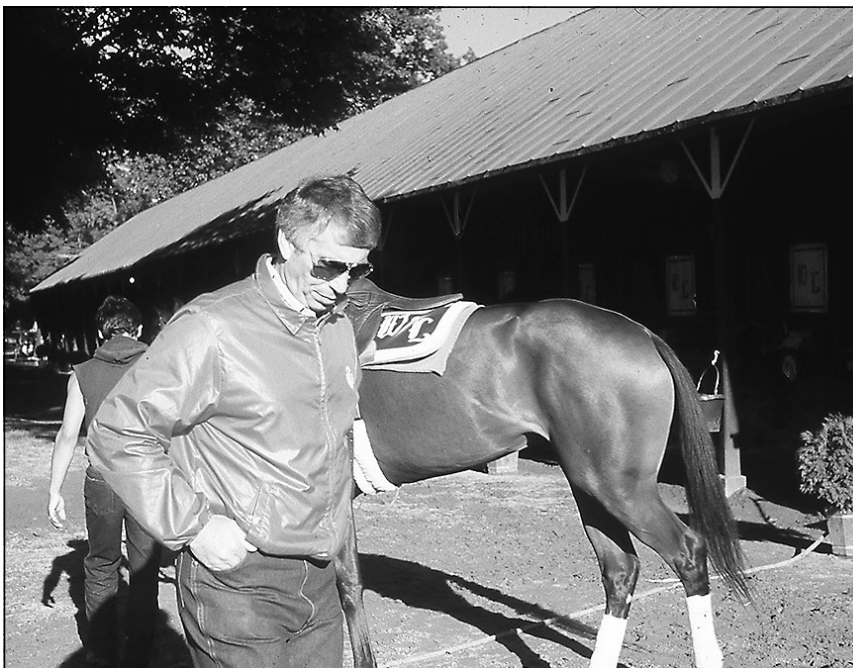
Enjoy

## Would you do anything differently?

"I'd do it all the same. I look back at those young guys I started and I'm really proud of that. Those guys come to you, I interviewed a lot of guys, I didn't hire all of them, some I hired are bagging groceries somewhere, they didn't make it. They say to you, 'Boy, I want to be a part of this, I want to learn from you, I'll do anything, I'll be up, I'll do anything.' I said, 'Whoa, wait a minute, that's a given. If I put two or three years into you and you don't turn out, I've wasted two or three years of working with you every day.' There's this side (holds up the front of his right hand) and there's this side (holds up the back of his left hand). 'Don't get confused that you're going to be a big asset, you may be, but I'm going to put a lot of effort into it, too.' I tell them right at it. And I made sure I interviewed good guys. All those guys who worked for me were going to be good horsemen and have good stables without me. They might not have gotten the push; I gave them all a key client when they left, gave them the pony horse, gave them the saddle, game them a good start."

## Who chose the client?

"I chose the client. When Dallas Stewart went out, I gave him the Horton family. Todd left with Michael Tabor, they wanted to run down in Florida, and I didn't want to go down there. Mark Hennig had Team Valor. Mike Maker had Ramsey, he got Ramsey rolling. They all got somebody. Nobody did that for me. I had no clients. The only time I get a client is when they walk up. Like these guys who called this week. One guy had seven horses; he's obviously fired his trainer...he's disgruntled. I didn't get into it, I just said I'm full up."



Tod Marks

D. Wayne Lukas at Saratoga, circa 1987.

## Did you always want to train horses?

"I've been running at the county fair since I was 11 years old. Right there in my backyard. The Langlade County Fair. They ran races Friday, Saturday, Sunday. Talk about running them back quick. The races were 14 hands and under and 14 hands and over. That's how they divided it. Mine was under. The thing that was interesting about the fairgrounds, there were guys who were running at the old Hawthorne or wherever the old Chicago track was in the 50s. They would come up there and there were these small pens where they would put the show cattle in, there might be a row of 10 or 12 of them. It would be snowing; the snow might be two feet deep. They would take those old Thoroughbreds with bad ankles, tendons and they would leave them in there all day. Just standing in the snow. The next day, they would go to a fresh one. The fresh snow, they would have them all out there again."

## How old were you?

"I'm 9, 10 years old, riding my pony up there, I'm sure I drove them crazy asking questions, I wanted to know about this and that, everything. I wanted to know about the liniment, all of that stuff. They gave me a bottle of a liniment. They said this is what you use. I got to rubbing it on my pony and I stunk so bad, my mother wouldn't let me in the house, she said, 'hang your clothes out and get in the tub.'"

"I ran my pony in those races. Won some of them. Any breed. Could be Arabs, Quarter Horses, Thoroughbreds, didn't matter. If they were 14 hands and under, you were in there. They ran them 150 or 250 yards or a half mile. You could pick a spot depending on what you thought."

## Who was the fastest?

"A filly named Watch Me. She was really good. The pony I rode every day in the 14 hands and under was pretty effective, too."

## Were you riding them?

"I did when I was 11 or 12. I got big. This Helm-brecht kid, his dad rode for me. I've got a real influence on the Asmussen family and the Rice family. I've been around them and shared barns."

## And then what?

"Financially I didn't think I could compete, so I went the rodeo performance route. I had some really good show horses. Clyde Rice and I went to Burwell, Nebraska,

to the rodeo. We had a steer wrestling team. After the rodeo, they ran two Quarter Horse races and we watched those. I said to Clyde, we had one horse, his name was Broadway Blaze. 'You know what, I think Blaze is better than they are.' He said, 'You're kidding.' I said, 'I'm telling you, I think he's quicker than they are.' So we went to Mobridge, South Dakota, that was the next stop. We got up there and we had a week to spend. I started gating this horse. They had a little old starting gate sitting there. So, I'm gating this horse and I got him gated. They ran a couple of races with the rodeo and he just parked. I told Clyde, that's the last time I'm going to jump off a horse or rope or steer. No more. This is us right here. This is where we need to go. We made more money and we didn't have to risk breaking our neck. I was 16, 17, like all young guys, wanting to rodeo. Maybe 18. Still in high school."

## So, you followed the county fair circuit?

"In Wisconsin and Illinois, all the county fairs had a little race or two. We made that whole circuit. Some of them were really small places. You go to Aniwa, Wisconsin and you drive three miles, maybe two and you're on the Indian Reservation, the Menominee Indian Reservation. The center of the reservation is Keshena, Wisconsin. They had an Indian Festival and of course they had horse racing. They would dance by the fire all night, all in full headgear, it was like a movie. I don't know if they do that anymore. It used to scare me a little. I was just a kid. Those old timers used to take me to those places, just let me go along."

"I started hitting the sales rings, that's where I made a lot of money. As a kid. There was an old, re-

*Continued on Page 33*



# Lukas -

■ Continued from page 32

tired guy in our community, he had what we would call an open truck, hop cattle up in in it, horses, whatever. No partitions. There was a real good sale in Cresco, Iowa. I would go there Thursday night with him. All he would do is drive me because he liked me. My dad would have to call ahead and tell them to take my bid because I was 12 years old, he'd tell them, 'He'll pay for them.' I would buy one or two horses there, bring them home and sell them. Go back, buy a couple more, that was a big deal, all through high school, I traded horses. Any kind of horses. Just horses. A horse I could make a family horse out of, whatever, you didn't have to rope off them or be a rodeo horse. It was easier to sell the other types."

## How did you decide on the horses you bought?

"Conformation more than anything. I'm not bragging but conformation has served me over all these years. There were two girls' camps in northern Wisconsin. I supplied all the horses to the camps for the summer. I got \$150 a head for them and got them back at the end of the summer. They were used up pretty hard at the camp; I would turn them out in a corn field that was already harvested. They would be out there, snow would be that deep, and they'd find those ears of corn. I'd put a big old alfalfa bale out here and there. They would get fat and round and in the spring, I would lease them back to them. About six in one camp and five in the other."

## Where did you get the land?

"I had to lease some land from my uncle. He charged me."

## So, you were in the horse business early...

"This was when I was nine or maybe 10, they were canning string beans. They would give you the seed under a contract, you planted the beans, and they would buy the beans back from you. I did that one year and I made something like \$4,000 on the beans. I hired the neighbor kids to pick them. That gave me all the cash I needed to buy horses. I started buying better horses after that. I even got a couple of registered Quarter Horses. My Quarter Horses were good days, too."

## When did you concentrate on Quarter Horses?

"I was probably a junior in high school. We were running in those county fair deals and then we started running in better races. We went to Fort Smith in Tulsa. I got a couple of breaks. Jacob Bunn was the CEO and the owner of watch company and he was also owner of Bunn-O-Matic Coffee. He was dating a woman in Tulsa, and he called the pres-



Tod Marks

D. Wayne Lukas has been looking at yearlings for decades.

ident of the American Quarter Horse Association and he said she was dabbling with these horses but he wanted her to have a top trainer. 'Who do you recommend?' Lo and behold, this guy said, 'There's a young guy making some noise at Park Jefferson. Try to get a hold of Wayne Lukas.' I was running horses at Park Jefferson and he came along, we became fast friends and trained a couple for him. I looked at the horses he had and I said, 'I can't improve these horses, they look terrific.' He said take them up to Park Jefferson and see if you can beat somebody. I took them up there and won the Futurity and the Derby with them."

## That was your first big break?

"He gave \$30,000 for a filly at the fall sale at Ruidoso which was a record. He started spending real serious money and we started winning for him. Big time. Sunland. Ruidoso. Good horses. Really good horses."

## When did you think about Thoroughbreds?

"My son (Jeff) kept pushing all the time. He'd say, 'Dad, we've got to go Thoroughbred over at Santa Anita.' We were at Los Alamitos. He said,

'We can beat them over there just as easy as we beat them here.' I said, 'Why would we go? We've got all these champions. We've got everything our way.' He said, 'It doesn't matter. Let's go over there and we'll beat them.' I went over there with two maidens, Effervescing and I bought Terlingua. That was my stable. We did beat them."

## Did you know you weren't going back?

"That money was so much better, the publicity, the satisfaction. I remember we were in a barn with a guy. He had the barn. Within a year, they had moved him out. We were getting horses right and left. Effervescing was supposed to be washed up. There's another one, emphasizing what you've got in front of you. I won two (stakes) with him in five days. That's when they said this Quarter Horse guy's got serious hop. He won the American Handicap on the turf. I entered him back five days later. He set a track record on both of them. One on the dirt. One on the turf. Five days apart. That's when everybody said, 'What the hell's he doing?' He was supposed to be through. I just got him fat and ready to run. There was a difference of opinion, some said it was his feet, some said it was his back end. I don't know. I didn't pay any attention to it. We bought him because he was a big, grand-looking son of a bitch. Really beautiful. Mel Hatley and I bought him together. I said to Mel, 'I think this horse is bad in his shoulders.' I'm going to put him in a massage program and change up what I'm doing. I did a lot of jogging and he got better and better and better. We sold him to the Japanese for \$4 million. He helped us get started. I ran Terlingua against the boys, that stirred up everybody, being the first daughter of Secretariat, that got a lot of publicity. Right after here came Landaluce. It was off."

## Why were you successful?

"If you're going to be successful at anything, you have to be a risk taker. I think people who play it close, analyzing, I don't think they ever get real successful. If you look back at history, at all successful people and they probably took a lot of risk early on. You hear about the self-made man, you know they took risk. You have to take risk."

## Leading Belmont Trainers

James Rowe (8): George Kinney (1883), Panique (1884), Commando (1901), Delhi (1904), Peter Pan (1907), Colin (1908), Sweep (1910), Prince Eugene (1913).  
Sam Hildreth (7): Jean Bereaud (1899), Joe Madden (1909), Friar Rock (1916), Hourless (1917), Grey Lag (1921), Zev (1923), Mad Play (1924).  
"Sunny Jim" Fitzsimmons (6): Gallant Fox (1930), Faireno (1932), Omaha (1935), Granville (1936), Johnstown (1939), Nashua (1955).  
Woody Stephens (5): Conquistador Cielo (1982), Caveat (1983), Swale (1984), Creme Fraiche (1985), Danzig Connection (1986).  
Max Hirsch (4): Vito (1928), Assault (1946), Middleground (1950), High Gun (1954).

D. Wayne Lukas (4): Tabasco Cat (1994), Thunder Gulch (1995), Editor's Note (1996), Commendable (2000).  
Todd Pletcher (4): Rags to Riches (2007) and Palace Malice (2013), Tapwrit (2017), Mo Donegal (2022).  
R. W. Walden (4): Duke of Magenta (1878), Grenada (1880), Saunterer (1881), Bowling Brook (1898).  
Elliott Burch (3): Sword Dancer (1959), Quadrangle (1964), Arts and Letters (1969).  
Bob Baffert (3): Point Given (2001), American Pharoah (2015), Justify (2018).  
John M. Gaver (3): Shut Out (1942), Capot (1949), Stage Door Johnny (1968).  
Lucien Laurin (3): Amberoid (1966), Riva Ridge (1972), Secretariat (1973).  
Frank McCabe (3): Inspector B. (1886), Hanover (1887), Sir Dixon (1888).  
David McDaniel (3): Harry Bassett (1871), Joe Daniels (1872), Springbok (1873).

# Time

I've reached that age.

"How's your son? How's your dad?"

Those are the questions asked more often than any other as I get back on the racetrack beat this week.

A reader once said to me, "You don't know us, but we know you. We know your wives, your kids, your parents, your friends. You are part of our family even if we aren't part of yours. That's what your writing does."

I had never thought about it before, but I guess that's true. Especially on this back page over 24 years where I've pushed the boundaries of a personal column more than most editors would have allowed. It's part of the deal and I guess that's why those questions are the most asked. My son and my dad have strung the lights across these pages more than anyone else. Well, Tom and Joe, but you know how they are, they're right here next to me. All good. All the time. Rocks. And Annie of course. She's good, too. Another rock.

As for the other questions.

"How's your son? How's your dad?"

The first one is easy. Fifteen. Mop of curly blond hair. Six feet tall. Maybe 6' 1". Today. He'll be 6' 2" tomorrow. Good student. Nice kid. People seem to like him. Just finished ninth grade at Highland in Warrenton, Va. Left-handed pitcher. Baseball play-offs started Monday night, he pitched two innings, went 3-for-3, four RBIs, they won 10-8. "I changed my batting stance, Dad." They played again Thursday night. Ask, oh hell, show any passing interest and I'll show you some videos. Yeah, Tom and Joe love Miles but they're tiring of the play-by-play.

Miles still pitches in the backyard, and it scares me more each time as he winds up and fires a physics-defying changeup at my flimsy mitt. "I'm working on something..." That's when I know I'll be diving for cover. He laughs as I roll on the ground and the ball goes sailing to the barnyard wall. There are baseballs strewn around our yard like dandelions



By Sean Clancy

on a summer day.

He likes horses, rides for fun. Rides with the Middleburg Orange County Beagles, mostly to talk to girls and see the sky. That's cool with me. No jockey here. He'll read our stuff this week, watch *Awakened* and Gordon's Jet Sunday and ask a question or two about the Belmont Stakes.

Miles plays the piano and is learning the guitar. Loves listening to music – Springsteen, Dylan, Prine and, yeah, some rap in there, too. Sorry about that, you can only influence a kid so far. Spins vinyl like Casey Kasem.

I've been here three days and I miss him like it's been three years.

As for Dad. That one's not as easy.

He turned 89 in October. Fell down and broke some ribs, punctured a lung somewhere along the line but didn't tell anyone. Went for an eye exam and wound up with an X-ray, a diagnosis and a hospital stay. Fell down a few more times this winter and spring. It makes him mad. Came down with RSV last week, spent a few days in Beebe Hospital in Lewes, Delaware. We watched Frankie double at Penn National and City Of Troy win the Derby. He liked those. We talked about old-school horses. Kelso, his favorite, Mod Man and Odd Man, too old jumpers with rhyming names and indelible marks. Rollicking Run and Riverdee, of course.

The falls have made their marks, like they always have. The ones way back when, when he was gal-

loping horses at Glasgow and Delaware Park, hunting with Vicmead Hunt and riding giveaway horses at long lost point-to-points. A do-it-yourself horse trainer. Amateur jump jockey learning on the fly. Four years in the Marines. An alcoholic and all that comes with it, he hasn't had a drop since 1981 – his greatest win – but there's a toll there, too.

He was living basically on his own at Rehoboth Beach. In a beach house he and my mom built in the early 1970s. Our sister Sheila moved in a few blocks away. Mom comes and goes as she's still selling real estate in Newark, Del. She broke her ankle but is still going strong. You can't beat her in Words with Friends or Spelling Bee.

Dad always said he was going to retire to the beach and eventually did, but not until all the hard miles of a horseman had been registered. He was riding his bike around the neighborhood up until a year or so ago. Going to the YMCA five days a week. Feeding his pet fox, Kate. And then a fall, another fall, RSV and, oh yeah, Covid in there too.

He missed Saratoga last summer. Missed Ryan's wedding in September. He had his sights on Middleburg Races in April and didn't make that either.

Yeah, he's slowing down. Mentally and physically. My family is thankful and grateful we've had him in all his independent, stubborn, opinionated ways for all these years. And we're hoping we'll have him for plenty more.

After a big race at Saratoga or a live streamed steeplechase, my phone has always rung. Dad critiques a ride, analyzes a trainer's decision.

It rang after The Grey Wizard got there in the last jump of the Belmont Gold Cup, the last race Thursday night.

"How was the first day?" Dad asked.

I told him about the impending rain, the crowd, the vibe.

"It looked like good racing," he said. "We had the winner of the last."

I never doubted it.

## BIG DAYS BIG WINS

MAY 27, 2024 | SANTA ANITA

**ANISETTE (GB) wins the Grade 1  
Gamely S. in her 4yo debut.**



There's a reason our  
racing partners  
**BELIEVE BIG!**

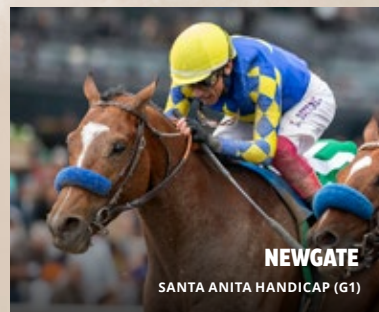
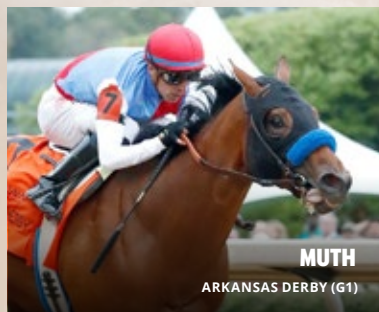
**eclipse**  
THOROUGHBRED | PARTNERS

[eclipsepartners.com](http://eclipsepartners.com)



## *September Standouts* **SUCCEED ON THE BIG STAGE**

Racing coast-to-coast and around the world,  
Keeneland September graduates deliver  
success at the top of racing, including:



The World's Yearling Sale

## *September Yearling Sale*

Begins Monday, Sept. 9

Learn more at  
[september.keeneland.com](http://september.keeneland.com)

*We Move Your Future!*



**Sallee**  
**Horse Vans**

Toll Free 800-967-8267  
in Lexington 859-255-9406

