

Year 26 • No. 1

Thursday, July 16, 2026

The **Saratoga**

Special

Saratoga's Racing Newspaper since 2001

Back Track

Saratoga 2026 hits full stride

Entries and Handicapping

Todd Pletcher Stable Tour

**Good starts for De Paz,
Kantarmaci, Rodriguez**

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Here&There...in Saratoga

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

Names of the Day Thursday

Smilensaycheese, third race. The 4-year-old New York-bred is out of Picture Day.

Sin Nombre, third race. Somebody must have been stuck as the 6-year-old's name means Nameless in Spanish.

Seismic Activity, fifth race. The 2-year-old filly, who races for Legion Racing and several partners, is by Epicenter.

Swiss Army Knife, eighth race. The 3-year-old gelding is out of Cleverly.

Names of the Day Friday

He's My Kind, first race. Owned by Stone Farm and Martine Head, the 3-year-old colt is out of She's My Type.

Sir Duke, second race. Blue Devil Racing Stable's 3-year-old gelding is out of Come Dancing. Stevie Wonder's song Sir Duke, released as a single in 1977 and part of the 1976 album Songs in the Key of Life, pays tribute to jazz great Duke Ellington and several others.

License Plate of the Day

MONGOHOF, New York. Wasting no time.

By The Numbers

6: Consecutive Delaware high school lacrosse championships won by Salesianum School. Sophomore long-stick midfielder Kendrick Carmouche, son of the Saratoga jockey, scored a goal in this year's title game.

11: Southbound horse vans on the Thruway Monday afternoon.

22.84: ROI for \$2 win bets on the last seven Saratoga steeplechase selections given out by The Special's Joe Clancy on the NYRA Fox show.

6: Grade 1 winners over the past year offered at Fasig-Tipton's Saratoga select yearling sale: Sierra Leone (2022 sale), Journalism (2023), Clicquot (2023), Commandment (2024), Shred The Gnar (2023) and Hope Road (2022). The 2026 sale is Aug. 10-11 and includes 230 yearlings in the catalog released Wednesday. Last year's sale topped \$100 million in gross sales.

9: Boxes filled with the book "Cody's Wish: A Boy, a Racehorse and a Fight for Life" inside The Special office Wednesday morning. Time to empty those boxes people. Join the Readers Club and get a free signed copy.

14: White device cords on a desk at The Special



Samantha Decker

Starting Lineup. A Todd Pletcher set gets ready to go to work at Saratoga Race Course.

8: Wins needed by Hall of Fame jockey Javier Castellano to reach 6,000.

12: Wins needed for Hall of Fame trainer Todd Pletcher to reach 6,000.

Worth Repeating

"I figure after five years training one or two projects it was time to regroup and get back here."

Austin Trites riding the pony headed to the main track with a set for Mark Hennig

"Now you have to do the easy part, go write it."

Trainer Todd Pletcher after Tom Law wrapped up the annual Fasig-Tipton Stable Tour Monday afternoon



"Helicopter Dad."

Retired trainer Tom Amoss, standing outside his old barn and chatting with successor Kinnon LaRose Wednesday morning

"That would be like a dream come true."

Owner Matt Groff about being at Saratoga Wednesday morning

"I'll buy you anything you want."

Exercise rider to outrider, after catching a runaway, Wednesday morning

"That's a 12-pack."

Outrider, making an order

"The apocalypse."

Trainer Jeremiah Englehart stepping out of his office in the Oklahoma Annex late Wednesday morning under the spooky orange haze

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.

2026 Summer Schedule: Twice a week July 16-Sept. 5.

Sales Week Daily Aug. 7-12.

All editions in print and online.

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Here&There...in Saratoga

Cody's Wish Book Signings

Longtime journalist and The Saratoga Special writer Paul Halloran will sign copies of his book "Cody's Wish: A Boy, a Racehorse and Fight for Life" at the Jockey Silks Porch at Saratoga Race Course Friday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The book chronicles the bond between Cody Dorman and the racehorse named for him whom Cody met through Make-A-Wish while battling Wolf-Hirschhorn Syndrome. Horse of the Year in 2023, Cody's Wish captured back-to-back Breeders' Cup Dirt Miles in the presence of Cody, who followed the Godolphin-owned Thoroughbred to racetracks across the country, including Saratoga for the Whitney in 2023. Halloran will also have a book signing Saturday night from 7-9 at Impressions, 368 Broadway. Members of The Saratoga Special's Readers Club will receive a free, signed copy of the book. Sign up at thisishorseracing.com/club.

Worth Repeating

"I don't have anything smart to say."

Trainer Dave Duggan on the way to train a set on the Oklahoma Tuesday morning.

"The best steeplechase rider . . . soon as I saw you, I was like, 'This is game on.'"

Fan, while getting an autograph from Graham Watters, who rode winner McTigue July 5

"Put that in your paper."

Watters

"Merry Maker is a great, big stamina horse. Rocket One is a big, tall, leggy horse. It takes all sorts."

Watters, after calling McTigue "small and bouncy and racy"



Samantha Decker

Woody's Corner. Saratoga backstretch resident woodchuck, groundhog (what do you call them?) looks for breakfast.

"We're rocking the blue. I didn't like the old LSU yellow so I had to get rid of that. No yellow for me. It's the end of an era, but he was cool with it."

Trainer Kinnon LaRose, whose stable colors differ slightly from that of former boss Tom Amoss



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Henry Koehler
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With Todd Pletcher

We follow the self-mandated protocol every summer. Make an appointment, do the research, make a list, show up early, settle in and listen.

“Might be a short list,” Todd Pletcher joked outside his barn Monday morning while confirming the annual leadoff edition of the Fasig-Tipton Stable Tour.

Six hours later the list went 40 deep – that’s before we made some cuts – and it took about an hour and more than 4,000 words to detail just part of one of racing’s most decorated and deep stables. Pletcher, sitting at 5,988 wins heading into today’s card at Saratoga Race Course, officially got on the board at the 2026 summer meeting with a winner Friday and two more Sunday. One came in the teeth-gnashing turf maiden fourth Sunday. More on that below.

Pletcher has averaged almost 30 wins per meet for the last 10 years, so the milestone 6,000th victory figures to happen near the midpoint of the 46-day meet. And that doesn’t include any potential winners out of town.

“Chipping away at it,” Pletcher said of the milestone reached by just five trainers.

The wins include 842 graded stakes – 211 Grade 1, 288 Grade 2 and 343 Grade 3. He’s North America’s all-time leading trainer by earnings with more than \$524 million in purses, about \$24 million clear of fellow Hall of Famer Steve Asmussen.

“He’s closing in, quickly,” said Pletcher, behind Asmussen, Jerry Hollendorfer, Jack Van Berg, King Leatherbury and Scott Lake on the all-time wins list.

Eight Eclipse Awards, the Hall of Fame induction in 2021, 10 North American earnings titles, six classic wins and 16 Breeders’ Cup wins in, Pletcher continues the hunt for more. He nearly added another classic this spring with Renegade, who came up a neck short of Golden Tempo in the 152nd Kentucky Derby.

There are Derby seconds like Invisible Ink in 2001 and Bluegrass Cat in 2006, and then there are Derby seconds like Renegade.

“The one that stings is the Renegade Derby. That was a tough one,” Pletcher said. “That’s the first time that at the eighth pole I thought we might



Samantha Decker

The Todd Pletcher barn is geared up for another Saratoga season.

win. So that was a little different. We’ve had a few seconds, but they were late closing, not going to get there, never thought they were going to win during the course of the race.”

Narrow defeats haunt all horsemen, even the ones with trunks full of trophies and with plaques on Union Avenue.

“That’s a good question,” Pletcher said about how long it might take to get over one like that. “In this sport you have to brush yourself off from everything, every day, but that one you think about a little more than most.”

Pletcher also freely concedes that he’s come out on the right end of some close finishes – even already into this Saratoga meeting, and of course with filly Rags To Riches over Curlin in the 2007 Belmont Stakes – so he can’t complain too much.

“I’ve watched that (Rags To Riches’ win) a number of times and thought, if that goes the wrong way, you know ...” he said. “Then I saw the other day when they were doing the Aqueduct interviews for closing day and asking people about memorable wins. Ramon Dominguez mentioned Stay Thirsty and when he won the Cigar Mile and beat Groupie

Doll. That was still the best head-bob we’ve ever got. He was a neck behind and won somehow. We lost some of those too but that was the best head-bob we’ve ever got.”

Pletcher ranks sixth on the North American trainer standings this year with more than \$8 million in purses. He’s won nine graded stakes so far and looks for more after what he called a “very disappointing Belmont Stakes weekend.”

“It just seemed like nothing went right,” he said. “We didn’t enter some horses very well. Trying to participate during that window, we didn’t do a great job of reading the condition book. Probably should have waited for some different spots. When you have clients coming in and they want to see their horses run, you enter a little ambitiously, which we did. We were fighting a bit of a virus in the barn, a few horses got sick after they ran. Which makes you think maybe they were harboring something, subclinical, those kinds of things.

“Whatever meet you want to call it, it was off to a slow start. Things picked up this past weekend. One on Friday, two Sunday. Hopefully a sign of

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Stable Tour –

■ Continued from page 6

things turning around.”

Pletcher won 19 juvenile races at last year’s Saratoga meet and the success of the barn often flows through the 2-year-olds. This year’s group looks well-meant yet again, stacked with high-dollar yearlings with pedigrees to make anyone envious.

“We’re just getting at that point where we’re starting to see what we have,” Pletcher said before going through the group with The Special’s Tom Law Monday afternoon.

Renegade: The big horse. Owned by Robert and Lawana Low and Repole Stable, 3-year-old son of Into Mischief won the Grade 1 Arkansas Derby before a narrow defeat to Golden Tempo in the Kentucky Derby. He skipped the Preakness and returned to finish third behind Golden Tempo and Commandment in final Belmont Stakes at Saratoga. He’s breezed three times since the Belmont, including a half last Friday in :48.11 on the main track.

“Thought he ran terrific in the Derby. Felt like we were just taking a little while rounding back into form for the Belmont. He had a good week leading into it. Everyone talks about the spacing of the Derby and the Preakness and the Belmont, and all this, in his case another week would have probably had him right back to where he was going into the Derby. He ran a respectable race but I don’t think he fired the same race he did in Arkansas or at Churchill. Now we have a little extra time, point to the Jim Dandy, he’s put back on some weight and doing well. He’s a quality horse, shows up and gives you an effort every time.”

Did you and the owners give any consideration to this weekend’s Haskell or was it always the Jim Dandy?

“We had the conversation. Our three Travers winners have all gone the Jim Dandy-Travers route. There’s an advantage to staying at home, having a race over the track, not shipping. We decided and felt like that was the best route for him.”

Liam’s Law: The most infamous winner here early in the meet, not for anything he did but instead because the race originally carded for 1 mile on the turf wound up being changed to 1 1/16 miles when jockeys raised concerns over the short run to the first turn and size of the field. Robert and Lawana Low’s 2-year-old from the first crop of the Pletcher-trained Grade 1 winner Colonel Liam won all the way on the lead by 1 1/4 lengths in his second start. Pletcher took pride in his association with Colonel Liam and his sire, Grade 1 winner Liam’s Map.

“Trained the sire and the grandsire, so you know you’re aging yourself, right? That was cool. The Lows purchased him in March and raced Colonel Liam. They were excited to have one win at Saratoga. Hopefully that’s a sign of good things to come. Looking through potential options, I don’t see a whole lot until the With Anticipation. We’ll look at that.”

So how about the long delay and eventual change in distance?

“I said something to one of the racing officials over there when they were asking if we were OK running a mile and a sixteenth. I said, ‘yeah, no problem, just don’t put the gate in the wrong place and make it a mile and an eighth.’ They did not think that was funny. They didn’t find the humor in that at all.”

Capturing: The barn’s first winner of the meet, 3-year-old More Than Ready filly won a 5 1/2-furlong optional claimer on the turf last Friday for Bridlewood Farm and Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners. She improved to 2-for-5 on the season, the other win also coming in a 5 1/2-furlong turf allowance at Keeneland.

“Talk about a good head bob. She got a great one. Seems the cutback worked well for her. We’re still very proud of More Than Ready. He’s been a remarkable stallion.”

Ted Noffey: Spendthrift Farm’s unbeaten 2-year-old champion from last year missed the spring classics due to bone bruising. He resumed training late this spring and continues to progress at Ian Brennan’s farm back in Ocala. Son of Into



Two-year-old Dallas Star heads to the wash pad after some work Wednesday.

Mischief sports 4-for-4 record with victories in a maiden and the Grade 1 Hopeful at Saratoga last summer.

“I would imagine we’ll be seeing him here in the next couple weeks. He’s in Ocala. I saw him a couple weeks ago and he looks really well. One setback after another has delayed his comeback. I don’t think he’ll make a race at the meet but hopefully soon thereafter.”

Nearly: Another top 3-year-old on the Triple Crown trail this season, Centennial Farm’s Grade 3 Holy Bull Stakes winner went to the sidelines with an ankle issue. Son of Not This Time has three wins in five starts.

“I think he goes back in training next week. He got some time off after the Florida Derby. He’s in Virginia, will start back with Paula Parsons (Centennial’s head trainer in Middleburg). Same thing, he’s probably a month away, foundation galloping and then will come to us. The good news about Ted Noffey and Nearly is there’s a chance they could stay in training at 4. That would be nice.”

Powershift: Repole Stable’s 3-year-old Constitution colt led early before fading to last of nine in the Belmont Stakes. He finished sixth in the Grade 3 Tampa Bay Derby before a maiden win on Kentucky Derby Day at Churchill Downs earned him a spot in the Belmont.

“I thought that was disappointing. It was an ambitious placing coming off a maiden race but he always trained really well, trained with Renegade and other horses that we knew were graded stakes quality. The strange thing is I think the track was playing speed favoring pretty much the whole weekend, then it changed late in the day, we got the rain while they were in the post parade, the race came back with a slow time. Maybe that worked against him a little bit. He was a little tired after the race and we backed off, sent him to Ocala for a freshening. He’ll probably join us back at Palm Beach Downs when we get back there in September.”

Zany: Repole’s 3-year-old daughter of American Pharoah cost \$350,000 at the 2024 Fasig-Tipton Saratoga sale. The winner of last year’s Grade 2 Demoiselle Stakes at Aqueduct and the Suncoast Stakes in February at Tampa Bay Downs, she finished second in the Grade 1 Ashland before a sixth in the Kentucky Oaks. She joined Pletcher’s Saratoga division after that and has posted four breezes, including a bullet half Monday in :47.79 on the main track.

“She worked good this morning. We’re kind of torn between the Monmouth Oaks and the Coaching Club American Oaks. There’s a chance we cross enter. She worked well enough this morning that, we were originally taking the conservative route and going to Monmouth but that made us rethink that this morning. We’ll see.”

How would you make that decision, based on who is in each race or how she’s doing?

“Probably a combination of those things.”

Tommy Jo: Spendthrift Farm’s homebred Grade 1-winning daughter of Into

Mischief finished last of 10 in her comeback last week in the Grade 3 Victory Ride. She won her debut and the Grade 1 Spinaway last summer at Saratoga before a victory by DQ in the Grade 1 Darley Alcibiades at Keeneland. Off since finishing fifth in the Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Fillies at Del Mar, she came away slow at the start of the Victory Ride and raced toward the back of the field the entire 6 1/2 furlongs.

“I don’t have a good explanation. She seemed to come out of it well. She’s a very forward training filly, aggressive. The filly (Carmel Coast) broke through the gates next to her and she just kind of stood there. I was happy she didn’t do anything and follow suit, charge the doors herself, but it also made me think she’s pretty quiet not to react to that. Then she broke a length behind the field, got caked with dirt and never felt like she fired at all.

Regroup?

“Yes. Those kind are tough to gauge, too, because she’ll come back and breeze really well like she always does. It’s going to be hard to know for sure until we run her again. That was puzzling and disappointing.”

Antiquarian: Another victim of a poor start, Centennial Farm’s multiple graded stakes winner finished fourth in the Grade 2 Suburban July 4 after another fourth in the Grade 1 Metropolitan Handicap on Belmont Day. A 5-year-old son of Preservationist, he won last year’s Grade 1 Jockey Club Gold Cup at Saratoga and sports a record of 5-3-0 in 13 starts with \$1,200,350 in earnings.

Samantha Decker

“Johnny (Velazquez) said he tried to leave there so hard that the ground just left and he spread-eagled. It looked like there were a couple that could go with the winner (Phileas Fogg), they didn’t and they backed it up into him, went slow. He tried hard, just in a difficult position the entire trip. I think we’ll keep an eye on the Whitney. Certainly on paper it’s coming up a super tough race, but if you start looking around at options there aren’t many. He hated Del Mar, didn’t do any good out there, didn’t handle the racetrack at all, so that wipes off the Pacific Classic. Then you look at other opportunities and there aren’t a ton of them. We’ll train like we’re looking at the Whitney and see if he trains accordingly.”

Tip Top Thomas: A \$160,000 buy out of the 2023 Fasig-Tipton Kentucky October yearling sale, 4-year-old Grade 1-placed son of Volatile continued to progress toward his comeback with half-mile breeze in :49.56 Monday on the main track. Owned by James Bakke and Gerald Isbister, he won last year’s Grade 3 Indiana Derby and Smarty Jones Stakes. Off since a third in the Dwyer Stakes in early November at Aqueduct.

“I was watching the Indiana Derby this weekend and couldn’t believe it was a year since he won that. There’s an allowance race we’re kind of keeping an eye on. He’s a solid citizen for sure. Good training horse, always shows up, tries hard, versatile.”

Disruptor: Winner of the Grade 3 Challenger Stakes at Tampa Bay Downs, 4-year-old son of Gun Runner went to sidelines after runner-up finish in the Grade 1 Churchill Downs Stakes on Derby Day. He’s 3-for-6 for partnership of Repole, Spendthrift, Big Easy Racing, Titledown Racing, Winners Win, Golconda Stable, Ali Goodrich and Mark Parkinson.

“We had to give him a little bit of a break. He got sick after that race at Churchill. We couldn’t get him back on track. He’s another that will join us back at Palm Beach Downs in September. Talented horse and could have a good year next year if things go right.”

Grande: Repole’s 4-year-old son of Curlin won the Grade 3 Ghostzapper in late March at Gulfstream Park before back-to-back sixths in the Grade 2 Alysheba at Churchill and Grade 3 Salvator Mile at Monmouth. He’s 4-for-7 with \$371,940 in earnings.

“I don’t know what we’re going to do with him. He didn’t run at all last time at Monmouth. We were hoping he’d run well there, come back for the Monmouth Cup. Didn’t seem to love it there. Might look at something at Colonial or an allowance race here.”

Continued on Page 10

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Stable Tour –

■ Continued from page 8

Grand Sonata: Whisper Hill Farm's homebred multiple graded stakes winner won six of 35 starts with nine seconds and two thirds for \$2,640,925.

"I think he is officially retired. I know they were trying hard to find a stallion deal somewhere. Not sure if they were successful. They were talking about Canada at some point. Just a couple nagging things. He'd been so good to us, had such a great career, wanted to go out while he was still healthy. If you look back over his career, a head here, a neck there, a half-length there, he could have been \$8 million. He was a cool horse."

Major Dude: Another fan favorite and a \$550,000 purchase out of the 2021 Fasig-Tipton Saratoga sale, 6-year-old multiple graded stakes-winning son of Bolt d'Oro finished 12th in the Grade 1 Pegasus World Cup Turf in late January at Gulfstream Park in his 27th start. He won eight times with four seconds and five thirds for \$1,418,747.

"Same thing, he was a farm favorite, a barn favorite, so he's retired at Spendthrift and being rewarded for all the good he did for us."

Be You: Repole's 5-year-old Curlin gelding won the Toboggan Stakes in early February at Aqueduct before a third in the Grade 2 Carter and a fifth in the Knicks Go Overnight Stakes on Derby Day. He's 4-for-14 with \$396,940 in earnings.

"I thought there was going to be a race in here, this new book that came out last night, but there's not. One of those horses, 6 furlongs is a little short, a mile is maybe a tick long, seven-eighths only comes around once in a while. Again, really nice horse that shows up every time. We'll find a spot for him at some point. Meanwhile he might become Renegade's weekly mate."

Class President: WinStar Farm's, First Go Racing's and CHC Inc.'s 3-year-old Uncle Mo colt won the Grade 2 Rebel Stakes to put his name in the mix for the spring classics before he was scratched from the Grade 1 Blue Grass at Keeneland and went to the sidelines with bone bruising.

"He's still at WinStar getting some time off. Elliott (Walden) was telling me a couple weeks ago he's getting ready to get back in training. Talented horse. We need to get him back and he could have a good fall and next year, too."

Courting: Owned by Whisper Hill, Stonestreet Stable and Windancer Farm and a \$5 million yearling, 3-year-old son of Curlin out of multiple Grade 1 winner Cavorting flirted with potential run at the spring classics with sixth-place finishes in the Grade 2 Risen Star at Fair Grounds and Grade 2 Wood Memorial at Aqueduct. Off since the latter, he's breezed four times including a bullet half in company with Zany on the main track Monday.

"He worked this morning. That was his fourth work since he came back. Got a freshening at Whisper Hill. He's still eligible to an allowance race so we'll keep the options open."

She Be Smooth: Calumet Farm's homebred 3-year-old daughter of Lexingtonian won the Grade 2 Davona Dale Stakes in February at Gulfstream before a third in the Grade 2 Gulfstream Park Oaks. She missed the Kentucky Oaks with a setback after the latter.

"She got some time off and should be getting ready to go back into training at Calumet. I don't know if we'll see her this fall."

Grittiness: Repole's 0-for-6 maiden 3-year-old son of Curlin sports two stakes placings – in the Withers at Aqueduct and the Virginia Derby at Colonial Downs.

"Same thing, got some time off, too. Actually, the way the Derby ended up unfolding with his come-from-behind style, he probably would have picked up some pieces but we never could get him right after the Virginia race."

Classicist: St Elias Stable homebred 4-year-old son of Curlin finished third in the Excelsior Stakes in April at Aqueduct before a win there in late May. He finished last of 11 in the Grade 2 Suburban July 4.

"That was a disappointing effort. He's become a bit of an underachiever, always promised a bit more. I don't know what we'll do with him next. I've been



Samantha Decker

Tumoohaat is a daughter of dual champion Malathaat.

lobbying to get him castrated. So far Classicist is coming out on the better end of that debate."

Presidential Power: St Elias' and Whisper Hill's 3-year-old Constitution colt improved off a sixth in his debut June 5 at Saratoga with a second in a 9-furlong maiden race here last Friday. A \$675,000 yearling purchase, he's out of the \$1.45 million Fasig-Tipton Saratoga Medaglia d'Oro yearling Whisper To Mama.

"He's a bit of a work in progress, kind of green down the lane, wandering around a bit, but could be one we see move forward here with a little bit of experience."

Time to Dream: Repole's 3-year-old daughter of Not This Time cost \$750,000 at the 2024 Fasig-Tipton Saratoga sale. She won her debut and the P.G. Johnson Stakes at Saratoga last summer before a third in the Grade 2 Jessamine at Keeneland and a 10th in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf at Del Mar. Third in the Grade 2 Wonder Again during Belmont Week, she finished fifth in the Grade 1 Belmont Oaks July 4.

"She's been a little frustrating. She looked so good here last year then we took her to the Breeders' Cup, she didn't fire at all. She's come back and just hasn't quite got back to that same level. We might try to give her a little class relief, find an allowance race and see if we can get back on with her."

Roadie: Whisper Hill's 4-year-old gelding by Maclean's Music makes third start in today's second, a 1-mile state-bred maiden on the main track. A \$230,000 purchase out of the 2023 Fasig-Tipton Saratoga New York-bred yearling sale, he's a half-brother to Grade 3 winner and recent Grade 1 Belmont Derby runner-up West End Kid.

"Should like a little more distance going to a mile. Closed with a little bit of interest going seven-eighths. Useful New York-bred type that could improve with some distance."

Beach Life: Repole's 2-year-old daughter of the Pletcher trained freshman sire and multiple Grade 1 winner Life Is Good disappointed at odds-on in her debut and makes second start in today's fifth, a 5 1/2-furlong New York-bred maiden on the turf.

"We're getting her on the turf, which hopefully makes a difference. The bottom side of her family is a bit turf. She's probably a useful type filly."

American History: An \$825,000 yearling purchase last September by CHC, Maverick Racing and First Go Racing, son of Constitution is the fourth foal out of the winning War Front mare Bloody Point, a half-sister to multiple Grade 1 winner and successful sire Vekoma.

"Another one for WinStar, he's been training pretty well."

Pippa Adds and Raghba: Uncoupled entry in today's sixth, a 9-furlong maiden for fillies and mares on the main track. Spendthrift's 3-year-old Yaupon filly Pippa Adds finished second and third in her last two starts. Shadwell Stable's homebred 4-year-old Curlin filly Raghba makes her 11th start and first since mid-April at Keeneland.

"Raghba is up to six seconds now, including four in a row. Hopefully they break through here at some point."

Noble Confessor: St Elias' homebred 4-year-old Quality Road colt sports two Grade 2 placings and finished sixth in the 2024 Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf at Del Mar. He comes into Friday's sixth, an 11-furlong optional claimer on the turf, with a win two back going 1 mile at Keeneland and a second going the 11 furlongs at Churchill.

"He's been a solid horse. He's been on the board in some stakes, won a couple races and seems to be versatile with distance. This is a mile and three-eighths, which we're trying to figure out if that's his specialty or if a mile and an eighth is a little better. This should provide us some clarity on that."

Scalable: Repole's Grade 3-winning daughter of Speightstown is entered main track only in Friday's \$150,000 De La Rose Stakes. She's won six of 19, including the Top Flight and Ladies this year at Aqueduct, with \$757,778 in earnings.

"Probably going to enter her back in the Molly Pitcher (July 18 at Monmouth). She won the Monmouth Oaks there as a 3-year-old so it makes sense. The forecast looks hot and dry for Friday so I don't think it'll be coming off the turf."

Tumoohaat: Shadwell Farm's homebred 2-year-old filly by Into Mischief is the first foal out of the Pletcher-trained two-time champion Malathaat. The winner of the 2022 Breeders' Cup Distaff, Malathaat won 10 of 14 starts with three seconds and \$3,790,825 over three seasons.

"She's coming along, acts like a nice filly, great temperament, needs to work a time or two from the gate but she's getting close. Beautiful filly, great first foal. Malathaat was pretty special."

Gun Runner-Cavorting colt: A half-brother to multiple Grade 1 winner and \$3,266,392-earner Clairiere, he cost Repole \$1.5 million last September.

"Purchased off Stonestreet, he's been training well and we're excited about him."

Foolin: A \$775,000 purchase by Spendthrift Farm and Lee Ackerley Racing in March, 2-year-old son of Practical Joke is out of the winning Unbridled's Song mare Song Sung True. He's breezed six times at Saratoga, including a half from the gate on the Oklahoma in :49.70 June 27 and another half on the main track Monday in :51.27.

"We like him, done everything right so far."

Victory Grant: Tied for the fifth most-expensive yearling at last year's Fasig-Tipton Saratoga sale on a bid of \$2.6 million from Spendthrift Farm, son of Into Mischief is the fourth foal out of multiple Grade 1 winner I'm A Chatterbox. He's worked six times at Saratoga, including a half in :48.77 Monday on the main track.

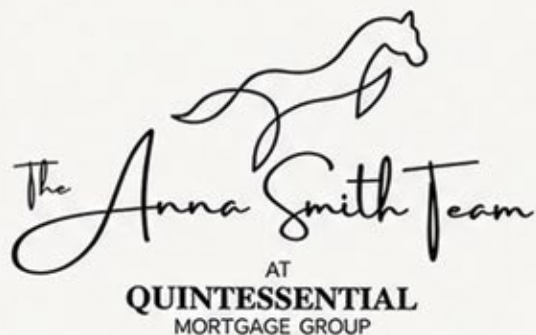
"He's getting fairly close. He got a little temperature on us a couple weeks ago but he's getting pretty close to being ready."

Dallas Star: Two-year-old colt by Flightline out of Grade 1-winning Unbridled's Song mare Tara's Tango was purchased for \$900,000 by CHC, Maverick Racing and First Go Racing last September. He breezed 5 furlongs Saturday in 1:01.95 on the main track, his sixth work in Saratoga since June.

"Another pretty nice colt out of Tara's Tango, who was a pretty accomplished mare. He's probably a week or so behind a couple of those other ones but he's been training well."

Munnings-Streak Of Luck filly: Repole spent \$425,000 to purchase the half-sister to Ted Noffey last September.

"She's doing good. A couple half-mile breezes so far. Repole made a nice buy, I think got her for \$450,000 as a yearling after Ted Noffey won the Hopeful. Of course, \$450,000 is still a lot of money but there's probably some value there."



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Strange Times

Early July start fuels plenty as Saratoga turns to third week

Eerie enough out there for you? Wednesday morning dawned hot, dry and orange-ish. Someone blamed wildfires in Canada, but we're not ruling out some sort of off-kilter damage to the space-time continuum given that Saratoga Race Course hosted races in June, started its regular meet July 3 and ran seven days before The Saratoga Special published its first edition.

But we're back. And you are too.

Catching up, Steve Asmussen and Horacio De Paz top the trainers' standings with four wins each. De Paz is 4-for-7, a .571 batting average. Asmussen's runners have made the trifecta in nine of 14 starts. Chad Brown, Mark Casse, Brad Cox, Ilkay Kantarmaci and Todd Pletcher have won three each. Kantarmaci needs one more to match his total from last year. Jockeys Flavien Prat (15 wins) and Jose Ortiz (14) jumped to the top of the jockeys' standings. Ricardo Santana Jr. is third with seven.

Opening Day started with the traditional 1 1/8-mile treat from the gate in front of the stands. Did you cheer? McAfee led throughout to win for trainer George Weaver and jockey John Velazquez. One race later, Kelsey Danner sent out the first 2-year-old winner of the meet in the form of Allura, a daughter of Mind Control, for owner Robert Evans. Tyler Gaffalione rode the winner.

Phileas Fogg dominates Suburban

The #6 saddle cloth from the Grade 2 Suburban Stakes still hangs proud above Phileas Fogg's stall, protected from the elements in a shiny display case now about two weeks removed from the race.

Trainer Gustavo Rodriguez stood under it Tuesday, grinning beside his superstar.

"For me, it's like a dream," he said. "He won the race. We thought we had a chance to win, but to win the way that he did was just ... wow. It was so impressive. I didn't expect him to run like that. Last year he was training good, but this year he's training even better."



Samantha Decker

Phileas Fogg (blue silks) shows the way early in the Suburban on July 4.

The son of Astern dominated the Suburban, cruising to a 10-length victory over a stacked field of 10 rivals that included 2025 Dubai World Cup winner Hit Show and last year's Jockey Club Gold Cup winner Antiquarian.

Kendrick Carmouche hurried the 6-year-old Phileas Fogg straight to the lead and cruised through early splits of :23.93 and :48.59. Phileas Fogg extended his lead from there to win in 2:01.70.

Phileas Fogg won his first graded stakes in last year's Suburban, edging Antiquarian by a head. Following that breakthrough, Phileas Fogg crossed the wire third in a troubled Jockey Club Gold Cup, but was ultimately disqualified to seventh after interference at the start. He wrapped up the year with a second in the Grade 2 Woodward and a fourth in the Grade 2 Cigar Mile.



Samantha Decker

Phileas Fogg and Kendrick Carmouche head to the winner's circle.

Prior to the July 4 Suburban, Phileas Fogg prepped for this year's Suburban with a victory in an optional claiming race May 1 at Aqueduct after a third there in late February in the Stymie Stakes.

"We've got the Whitney and the Jockey Club Gold Cup," Rodriguez said of his plans for the gelding for the rest of the summer. "Those two races are for him. He's been training great. He's a good horse. He came out of the race in good shape, Thank God, and I think we're going to lean on the Whitney August 8."

- Darby O'Brien

McTigue keeps jockey, gets Grade 1

A month after his jockey fell off at the first fence in a Grade 1 steeplechase on Belmont Stakes weekend, McTigue stayed attached to new rider Graham Watters and won the \$150,000 Leo O'Brien Handicap with a stretch rally over Rocket One July 5.

Trainer Cyril Murphy, whose horse ran loose ahead of the field, jumped several fences and evaded outriders for about 2 miles during the \$150,000 Beverly Steinman June 3, watched with considerably less worry this time.

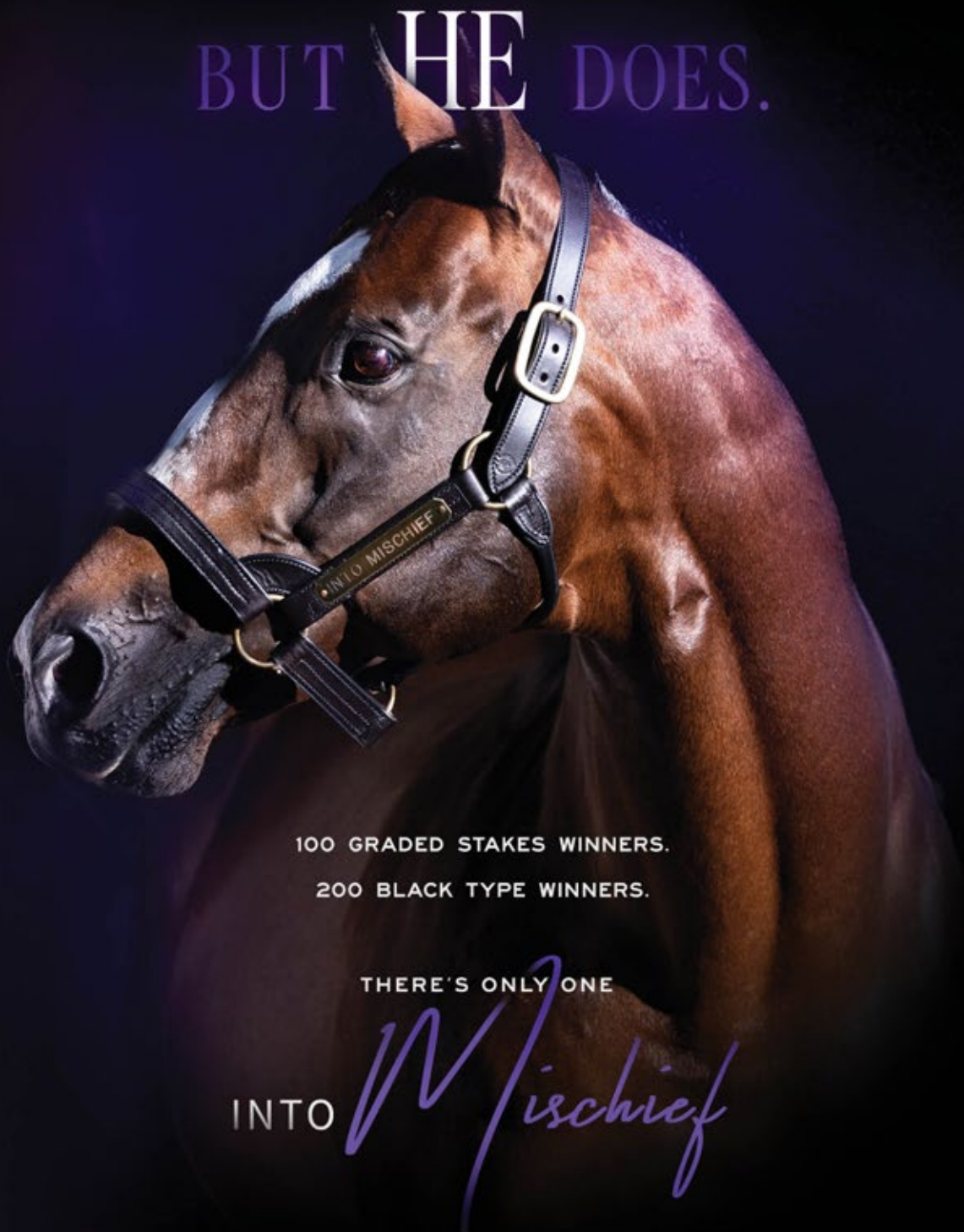
"It happens," said Murphy, a former jump jockey. "I could try and blame somebody, but I've been out there, it's happened. It's one of those things. We got him back to the barn here and there was no cuts or scrapes or anything on him, so we just poulticed him up and brought him home."

Based at owner Irv Naylor's farm outside Balti-

Continued on Page 14

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INTO *Mischief*

 SPENDTHRIFT

Recap -

■ Continued from page 12

more, Murphy treated the Irish-bred as if he'd run a full race – three days off, turn-out, jogging, some swimming in the farm pond. It was 10 days before the son of Fracas did any real work, and he responded.

"We just kept mixing it up, mixing it up, and this week it was just going through the motions of exercising – have a canter, do a bit of swimming to offset not being able to do too much on the firm ground, and that kept him fresh," Murphy said. "I liked his overall demeanor today, he got hot in the paddock, but he was soft. He was a little agitated the last day."

McTigue and Rocket One were the only returnees from the Steinman. Beaten a neck by the Saratoga-loving Jimmy P in that Grade 1, Rocket One wound up the 9-5 favorite just ahead of highweight Fil Dor and 2023 steeplechase champion Merry Maker. Take Your Seats set a quick pace, opened 15 lengths and still led into the stretch but was soon engulfed – first by Rocket One and later McTigue. Fourth and inside exiting the final turn, the winner came out from behind horses to find a clear running line, drew alongside Rocket One at the sixteenth pole and scored by a length as the top two were 13 1/2



McTigue (left) arrives in time to win the Leo O'Brien.

Coglianesi Photo

lengths clear of St James The Great in third.

"I was tracking the right horses, I was tracking the right jockeys so it was just a case of sitting tight and having the confidence in him," said Watters, aboard for the first time in a race. "If he didn't come with his run, he didn't. I wanted to give him the opportunity to do that and he did. I sat on him last week and gave him a jump and that was enough for me. He's small and bouncy and racy, but he definitely needs that cover early. If you're

out in front on him, you'd do too much. He'd get running too soon."

McTigue won over hurdles in Britain and France as a 3-year-old in 2022 and sold to Murphy and Naylor after pulling up in the 2023 Fred Winter hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival for owner Paul Byrne and trainer Emmett Mullins. McTigue won his American debut by disqualification in May 2023. He backed up that performance with a Saratoga stakes win and a third in the Grade 1 Jonathan Sheppard that summer before going to the sidelines with a suspensory injury. Murphy had him primed for a return last spring, but the injury flared again and he didn't return until April 2026.

"He just aggravated it so it wasn't as bad as the first time but if you press on, he might do something else," said the trainer. "We stopped, it came right this year and it's been good. With the time off, it's just taken a little longer to get back to his form.

He finds things relatively easy, so you can't push on him as hard as he probably needs for fear it'll come again but he got there and was where he needed to be today. It makes you happy for the horse."

The O'Brien win was his fourth start this year, but only his ninth since December 2022.

The win was Murphy's 100th as a trainer, af-

Continued on Page 16



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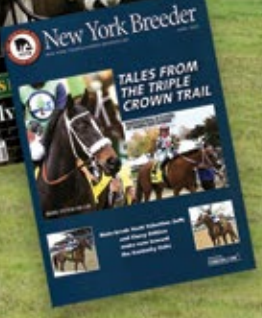


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Recap -

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ter collecting 69 in the U.S. as a jockey from 2000 through 2007.

“For what it’s worth, I keep track of the numbers on Equibase and I knew I was on 99,” said Murphy, who won his 99th with Gold Charm at Colonial Downs June 29. “For me, it’s a big deal with the numbers we have and where we compete. It’s got some significance.”

- Joe Clancy

Making his first shot

Kinnon LaRose’s earliest Saratoga Race Course memories involve making the four-hour drive from Ogdensburg with his family, staying in Lake George, going to the water park and then spending a day at the races.

“We’d just stand at the rail all day and watch races, we didn’t know anything about it,” he said. “But we loved coming here and loved the horses.”

Which probably made the results of Saturday’s first race feel a little strange.

LaRose, who took over as the head trainer from his former boss Tom Amoss in April, became a Saratoga-winning trainer with his first runner as Midnight Still made off with a \$115,000 maiden race for 2-year-olds. Racing for Double Down



Dave Harmon

Midnight Still gives trainer Kinnon LaRose his first win at Saratoga.

Horse Racing, the son of Curlin let Decimation and Motawaali battle up front, rallied four wide off the turn and drew off by 6 1/4 lengths while covering 5 1/2 furlongs in 1:05.20. Third in his debut at Churchill Downs in June, the Keeneland September purchase handled Saratoga like a pro while bet down to 4-5.

“The colt ran a great race,” said LaRose. “He ran great first time out, and it was good to see him

kind of take that next step up and improve second time out. He’s a nice colt to have in the barn, and I’m happy for Alex and Elza Mitchum, the owners. It was a special day and a special win – awesome feeling.”

LaRose’s wife Sabrina was there for the big moment, as were several family members and friends, plus Amoss and his wife Colleen. The victory was LaRose’s 14th as a trainer and came about three months after he saddled his first starter at Oaklawn Park in April – and just six years since he sent a cold email to Amoss about a job.

A former basketball player at Siena College and Sacred Heart University, LaRose mucked stalls, hotwalked, groomed, learned at every stage and worked his way up to assistant trainer. Amoss, a winner of 4,278 races in a career that began in 1987, announced his retirement this spring after talking through the succession plan with LaRose.

“I did not know anything like this was going to happen,” LaRose said. “Tom approached me this winter down in New Orleans and said, ‘Hey, you know, I’m going to retire and turn everything over to you.’ At the time, I probably didn’t know what I was in for, but at the same time it’s good because you just kind of adapt and try to take advantage of an opportunity that you’re given. You

Continued on Page 18



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Recap -

■ Continued from page 16

learn as you go, you make mistakes, but you keep going forward.”

Amoss explained the concept to his owners, who all stayed on board, and is available to consult and offer opinions. Otherwise, it's LaRose's show. There are 24 horses at Saratoga, 40 more in Kentucky and the stable passed \$1 million in earnings this year.

“Six years ago, I never would have envisioned myself in this position, but credit to Tom for giving me an opportunity,” said LaRose, 28. “I'm just very grateful and humbled to be here. Growing up four hours north of here, you never dream that you're going to be in this spot. I've caught a lot of breaks along the way.”

- Joe Clancy

Fast start for De Paz

Trainer Horacio De Paz found himself in an enviable spot following the first two weeks of the meet: tied for leading trainer with four wins in seven starts.

“We'll see how long it goes,” he said in his office Tuesday morning.

New York-bred Twenty Six Black kicked it off with a win in the Harvey Pack Stakes July 5, closing into a wicked pace set by Bring Theband Home and



Chelsea Durand/Coglianese Photo

Twenty Six Black heads to victory in the Harvey Pack Stakes July 5.

Full Disclosure after getting squeezed back after the break.

“It was great to see him come back,” said De Paz. “It was a hard effort in the Jaipur and he took a step forward. He's always been a nice, classy horse. I was happy to see that he was able to take that next step forward there. It set up perfect for him.

He did get squeezed coming out of the gate, which in hindsight probably a good thing. With the fast pace, he was able to close into it. That's what happened in the Jaipur, too. The pace was pretty honest and those horses weren't coming back, so he made that kick and made that run but they just weren't coming back.”

De Paz said he'd look at the Grade 2 Troy Aug. 9 for the War Dancer gelding's next start. He finished second in last year's Troy.

De Paz won two races on the July 11 card, starting with the stakes-placed Twirling Candy gelding Sounds Like A Plan in the fourth.

“Very good horse, very consistent horse. We gelded him at the end of last year, and he's just been rattling off those conditions,” said De Paz. “We had sort

of a soft spot to come back off the layoff, which was that New York-bred allowance. And I thought, ‘Oh, that'll be good.’ And then I saw the overnight and Spirit Of St Louis was in there and I was like, ‘Oh boy.’ And everybody was in uproar, even me,

Continued on Page 20

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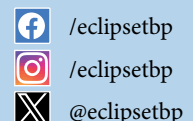


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Dave Harmon

First-time starter B Yutiful Carly upsets the sixth race July 11 for trainer Horacio De Paz.

Recap -

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and I have a nice horse. Everybody was like, 'Your horse is just as nice.' That race came up super tough and he showed up. Now he's come back with another great effort. There were some solid horses in there and it was nice to see him take another step forward."

First-time starter B Yutiful Carly, a daughter of Greatest Honour, scored by 3 lengths for De Paz and Triple B Stables in the sixth as the longest shot on the board, paying \$73.04 to win.

"She was very professional," said De Paz. "She did enough to not dislike her, but not enough to be like 'Wow! She's something special' type of thing. We just got her ready, got the foundation underneath her. She was always real professional in the morning so when she missed the break, that was a little unusual for her. But I said, 'Well, she'll get a lot of experience out of this.' But it didn't bother her. She came back with a run."

The weekend wasn't over yet. Professor Plum also scored on debut July 12. Owned by John Foster, Dennis O'Neill and De Paz, the son of Solomini went for \$40,000 at OBS April before joining the barn.

"He was sort of inconsistent in his works," De Paz said. "One week he would work good and one week he would work so-so. We didn't really know where he was at. He was always kind of goofy at the barn, just being

a 2-year-old colt basically. Nothing bad, but mentally wasn't there. When we took him over to the races, he was prancing and happy going to the holding barn. Once he got into the paddock, I was a little bit concerned with how he was going to be acting. I figured he'd come in hollering and acting like a 2-year-old."

Then the New York-bred subverted all their expectations.

"Once we put the tack on he was very professional," De Paz said. "He acted well during the post parade and broke well. I figured he was going to be at the back, break bad and be at the back and maybe make a run. But no, the light bulb went off at the right moment. He really turned it around there at the races. That was the most professional I've ever seen him."

Both juveniles will point to the 2-year-old New York-bred stakes in August – the Seeking The Ante for B Yutiful Carly and the Funny Cide for Professor Plum. Professor Plum will also be entered in the Fasig-Tipton July Digital Sale July 23-28.

– Darby O'Brien

Kantarmaci gets three early ones

Trainer Ilkay Kantarmaci likes to go day-by-day, a strategy that has proved successful so far.

"It feels good," he said Wednesday morning, holding one of his horses on the washpad as he received some post-training spa-time. "We work hard every day, and it's Saratoga. It's

Continued on Page 22

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STATE-OF-THE-ART AMENITIES

Recap -

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always special to win here.”

Kantarmaci has won three times with eight starters so far, tied with Chad Brown, Mark Casse, Todd Pletcher and Brad Cox. The mini hot streak started with a double July 9 as Karey won the fourth race and Gatsby scored in the seventh. The next day, New York Scrappy lived up to his name to win a New York-bred optional claimer.

“I need to work harder than ever to keep going,” Kantarmaci said. “I had a good meet in the springtime. I finished as a leading owner and trainer in the wintertime. My goal is to keep going. I have a great team right now. I have a lot of support and a lot of people working for me. I have better horses right now. It helps when you have better horses, it makes it easy.”

Kantarmaci enjoyed a strong Saratoga last year and he carried that momentum with him downstate, where he finished the Aqueduct winter meet third in the trainer standings and the Belmont at the Big A spring meet in fourth.

“I have claiming horses, so when I come to the barn every day is surprising,” said Kantarmaci,



New York Scrappy gives trainer Ilkay Kantarmaci his third win of the meet.

Dave Harmon

“Claiming horses makes me excited. Most of the horses in my barn I own, so I’m going to try to claim more, better horses.”

- Darby O'Brien

Bouncing Around

• Bregman Family Racing's To A Flame won the first stakes of the season, the \$150,000 Wild Applause, that turned into a mess as four horses

fell at the quarter pole. I Love Giraffes clipped heels and fell and three others went down behind her. I Love Giraffes will miss at least four months with a fractured hip. Smexy, Lovely Grey and Paris Carver all emerged relatively unscathed. Paris Carver's jockey Javier Castellano injured his back and will miss at least three weeks. The others – Paco Lopez, Dylan Davis and Gaffalione – have all returned to riding. Lopez, who rode I Love Giraffes, was given a 30-day suspension but is riding under a stay while he appeals. To A Flame became a stakes winner after placing in one at Kentucky Downs last year and collected her third win from six starts.

Also on Opening Day, Harper's Corner won the Schuylerville Stakes for 2-year-old fillies. The daughter of Speaker's Corner races for owner Charles Biggs and trainer Cal Lynch and improved to 2-for-2 after breaking her maiden at Laurel in June. In the \$150,000 Saranac for 3-year-olds on the turf Heeere's Johnny became a stakes winner and broke his maiden at the same time for trainer Ray Handal. The son of Oscar Performance, second in two stakes last year and also in his 2026 debut, rallied from last of 11 early to score by a neck at 15-1 for jockey Jaime

Continued on Page 24



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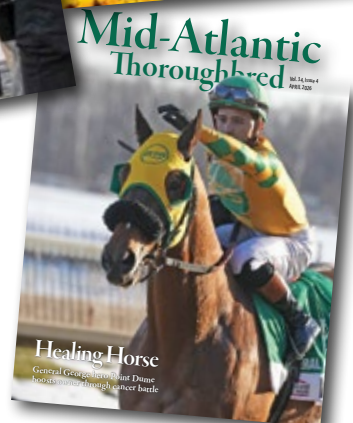
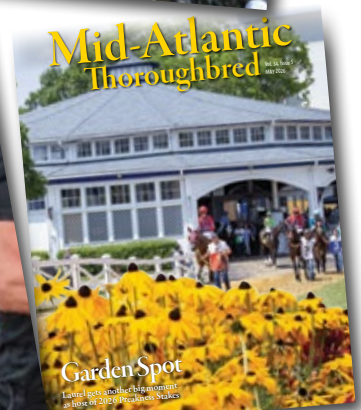
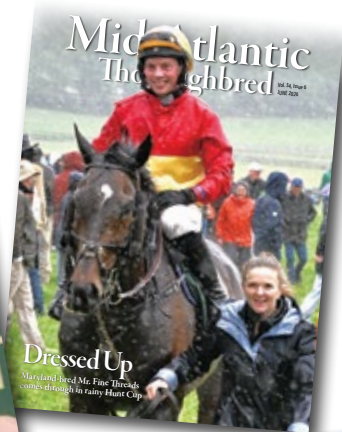
Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred boasts great stories from those familiar Saratoga Special faces, Joe and Sean Clancy, and Tom Law, plus award-winning favorites like Vinnie Perrone and a great stable of staff writers. Proud winner of the 2024 Equine Media Award for General Excellence Overall—judged the best among all publications in the country! Bright, refreshing and entertaining, it's a great regional publication you will surely enjoy.

Our July issue is packed with the kind of stories that are our trademark— a cover story on the Preakness and in-depth stories on all the Preakness weekend races. Don't miss in depth coverage of the Fasig-Tipton Midlantic May Sale, one of the premier sales of the season.

Our magazine is available online at MidAtlanticTB.com. Just join the Club and get the digital edition free! Of course, if you are more comfortable just curling up with a good read in your hands, then stop by the Saratoga Special offices at 259 East Avenue for a hard copy!



We bring stories to readers. Each edition strives to tell the stories behind the news in the region's Thoroughbred industry and the people who live and work in it. Hopefully, readers find gems they can't find elsewhere while fostering a deeper connection to the horses they care about.



Our July/August issue is available on line or at the Saratoga Special office

Recap -

■ Continued from page 22

Rodriguez. The winner races for Blue Bison Stable, Catherine Coyle and Magic Carpet Racing.

- In addition to the Suburban win by Phileas Fogg, the July 4 card featured Belmont Oaks and Derby wins by European shippers Kensington Ride and Title Role plus a Sanford score for 2-year-olds by Booked.

- Heman Harkie rode his first Saratoga winner when Baby Sassicaia won the eighth race, a \$16,000 starter optional, for trainer Norman Follett July 10.

- Mi Bago dug in and hung on. Zulu Kingdom dug in and kept rallying. Neither lost, though that wasn't the initial reaction when their numbers flashed on the infield big screen after the Kelso Stakes July 5. After a lengthy photo-finish review, the first flash read 1-8 and stayed that way long enough for some to groan in disappointment and others to exult in joy before the "DH" light flashed as well. The dead heat awarded the Grade 3 stakes to both horses, complete with identical \$84,375 winners' shares and win payoffs of \$3.66 (Zulu Kingdom) and \$8.40 (Mi Bago). The place payoffs were a squirrelly \$4.32 and \$8.80, respectively.

Zulu Kingdom, who races for Madaket Stable,



Samantha Decker

Sippin Pretty soaks up some water after winning the Victory Ride.

Michael Dubb, William Strauss and Michael Caruso, won for the eighth time in 11 starts for trainer Chad Brown. The Irish-bred son of Ten Sovereigns won the Grade 1 Maker's Mark Mile in April and was third in the Grade 3 Poker at Saratoga in June. New York-bred Mi Bago won his eighth race from 18 starts for Gary Barber and Mark Casse. The son of Vekoma won the Kingston here in June.

- Sippin Pretty opened the stakes slate for the second week with a 26-1 upset in the Grade 3 Victory Ride July 10 for 3-year-old fillies. Owned by Randall Bloch and Six Column Stable, the daughter of Yaupon edged 2-1 favorite Goodall late for trainer Ian Wilkes and jockey Ricardo Santana Jr. Flying P Stable's Ole Crazy Bone secured the

second graded turf marathon stakes win of his career in the Grade 2 Bowling Green July 11. Flavien Prat rode the Ghostzapper gelding to a nose victory in the 1 3/8-mile test over European invader Fort George for trainer Mike Maker. Ole Crazy Bone, a \$100,000 claim last June at Churchill Downs, also won last year's Grade 2 Kentucky Cup Turf Invitational going 1 1/2 miles at Kentucky Downs.

The July 11 card also featured a victory by Movin' On Up in the Grade 2 Caress Stakes for owner Ken Ramsey, trainer Saffie Joseph Jr. and jockey Tyler Gaffalione. The 5-year-old Accelerate mare won the 5 1/2-furlong Caress by 1 1/4 lengths over Zeitlos with her stablemate In Our Time third in the field of five.

- The July 12 card did not include a stakes, but didn't lack for drama as a distance change in the fourth race forced the cancellation/refunding of pick six wagers including the race. A pick six carry-over of \$166,702 shifts to today's card.

The race, a maiden on the inner turf for 2-year-olds, was originally slated for a mile but was shifted to 1 1/16 miles by the stewards due to safety concerns expressed by the jockeys given the run between the starting gate and the first turn. Because the change occurred after wagering had begun on the pick six, set to start with that race, those wagers were refunded.

Liam's Law, the 2-1 favorite, won for Robert and Lawana Low, trainer Todd Pletcher and jockey Flavien Prat.



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630-808-4162

Kyle Roscoe
Kyleroscoe@crownswayracing.com
847-814-2119

Pinkhooking Crop One

Ghostzapper-Curvette
Bought for \$100,000, Sold for \$750,000

American Pharoah-Belle de Nuit (ARG)
Bought for \$50,000, Sold for \$350,000

Jackie's Warrior-Heavenly Hill
Bought for \$150,000, Sold for \$300,000

Not This Time-Li'l Tootsie
Bought for \$150,000, Sold for \$200,000

Olympiad-My Lady Emma
Bought for \$40,000, sold for \$100,000

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2026 September Meet Stakes Schedule

SEPTEMBER 10 – 27

IROQUOIS (GIII)

DIRT DOZEN

Runs Saturday, September 12

Closes August 26

\$300,000

Includes \$75,000 from KTDF

Two-Year-Olds

One Mile, Dirt

POCAHONTAS (GIII)

DIRT DOZEN

Runs Saturday, September 12

Closes August 26

\$300,000

Includes \$75,000 from KTDF

Fillies, Two-Year-Olds

One Mile, Dirt

LOCUST GROVE (GII)

Runs Saturday, September 12

Closes August 26

\$400,000

Includes \$100,000 from KTDF

Fillies & Mares, Three-Year-Olds & Up

One Mile and One Sixteenth, Dirt

LOUISVILLE THOROUGHBRED SOCIETY (Listed)

Runs Saturday, September 12

Closes August 26

\$300,000

Includes \$50,000 from KTDF

Three-Year-Olds & Up

Six and One Half Furlongs, Dirt

OPEN MIND (Listed)

Runs Saturday, September 12

Closes August 26

\$300,000

Includes \$50,000 from KTDF

Fillies & Mares, Three-Year-Olds & Up

Six Furlongs, Dirt

SENECA OVERNIGHT STAKES (Listed)

Runs Saturday, September 19

Closes September 2

\$200,000

Includes \$65,000 from KTDF

Fillies, Three-Year-Olds

One Mile and One Sixteenth, Dirt

BOURBON FLIGHT

Runs Saturday, September 19

Closes September 2

\$300,000

Includes \$50,000 from KTDF

Three-Year-Olds

One Mile and One Sixteenth, Dirt

HARRODS CREEK

Runs Saturday, September 19

Closes September 2

\$300,000

Includes \$50,000 from KTDF

Three-Year-Olds

Seven Furlongs, Dirt

DOGWOOD (GIII)

Runs Saturday, September 19

Closes September 2

\$300,000

Includes \$50,000 from KTDF

Fillies, Three-Year-Olds

Seven Furlongs, Dirt

ACK ACK (GIII)

Runs Saturday, September 26

Closes September 9

\$400,000

Includes \$100,000 from KTDF

Three-Year-Olds & Up

One Mile, Dirt

LUKAS CLASSIC (GII)

Runs Saturday, September 26

Closes September 9

\$500,000

Includes \$100,000 from KTDF

Three-Year-Olds & Up

One Mile and One Eighth, Dirt

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September Meet: Sept. 10 - 27

To nominate, call 502.638.3806 or 800.928.3372

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Dan Bork, Asst. Racing Secretary, Stakes Coordinator: 502.638.3806 • dan.bork@kyderby.com

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Restart

Field of eight hurdlers for Kiser to kick off Thursday races card

The \$75,000 Jonathan Kiser Memorial Stakes leads off the day and the third week of the racing at the summer meeting Thursday at Saratoga Race Course.

A field of eight entered the 2 3/8-mile Kiser, named for the once rising star of the U.S. steeplechase ranks who died in a freak accident away from the track at age 22 in 2000. Kiser won two National Steeplechase Association championships (1997 and 1999) and won 90 races in less than five full seasons. At Saratoga, he won the 1997 A.P. Smithwick Memorial with Brigade Of Guards.

Leamington Racing's Famous Figure, winner of the Louis Brown McMillian Memorial maiden hurdle for former trainer Gordon Elliott at the

THURSDAY RACING PREVIEW

Iroquois Steeplechase, ventures into stakes company for the first time for trainer Ricky Hendriks. Jack Kennedy takes the return call on the 2-1 morning-line favorite.

Riverdee Stable's Cyber Ninja, a son of Arrogate who previously raced on the flat for Hall of Famer Bill Mott, looks to bounce back from a disappointing fifth in the Green Pastures Hurdle Stakes at the Iroquois. Jamie Bargary rides for trainer Jack Fisher, who also sends out Vintage Year for Riverdee.

Mr Percy comes into the Kiser off three solid starts this spring – two over hurdles when third behind Cyber Ninja in the Daniel Van Clief Memo-



Dave Harmon
Lord Flintshire tries to duplicate his flat win in 2024.

rial at Foxfield and a second to Rocket One in the Marcellus Frost at the Iroquois. The 6-year-old Irish-bred prepped for his hurdle return with a close fourth in a 2-mile flat race under steeplechase conditions June 29 at Colonial Downs. The Irish-bred won two hurdle races and raced in the 2025 Ebor Handicap at York against future Breeders' Cup Turf winner Ethical Diamond.

Morning March, Doctor Love, Lynches Knocks and Lord Flintshire complete the field for the Kiser, which goes at 1:10 p.m. Thursday's card includes a pair of New York-bred maiden races. The second, a 1-mile event on the main track worth \$100,000, drew a field of seven; while the fifth, a 5 1/2-furlong turf event for 2-year-old fillies worth \$115,000, drew 10 for the body of the race and six also-eligibles.

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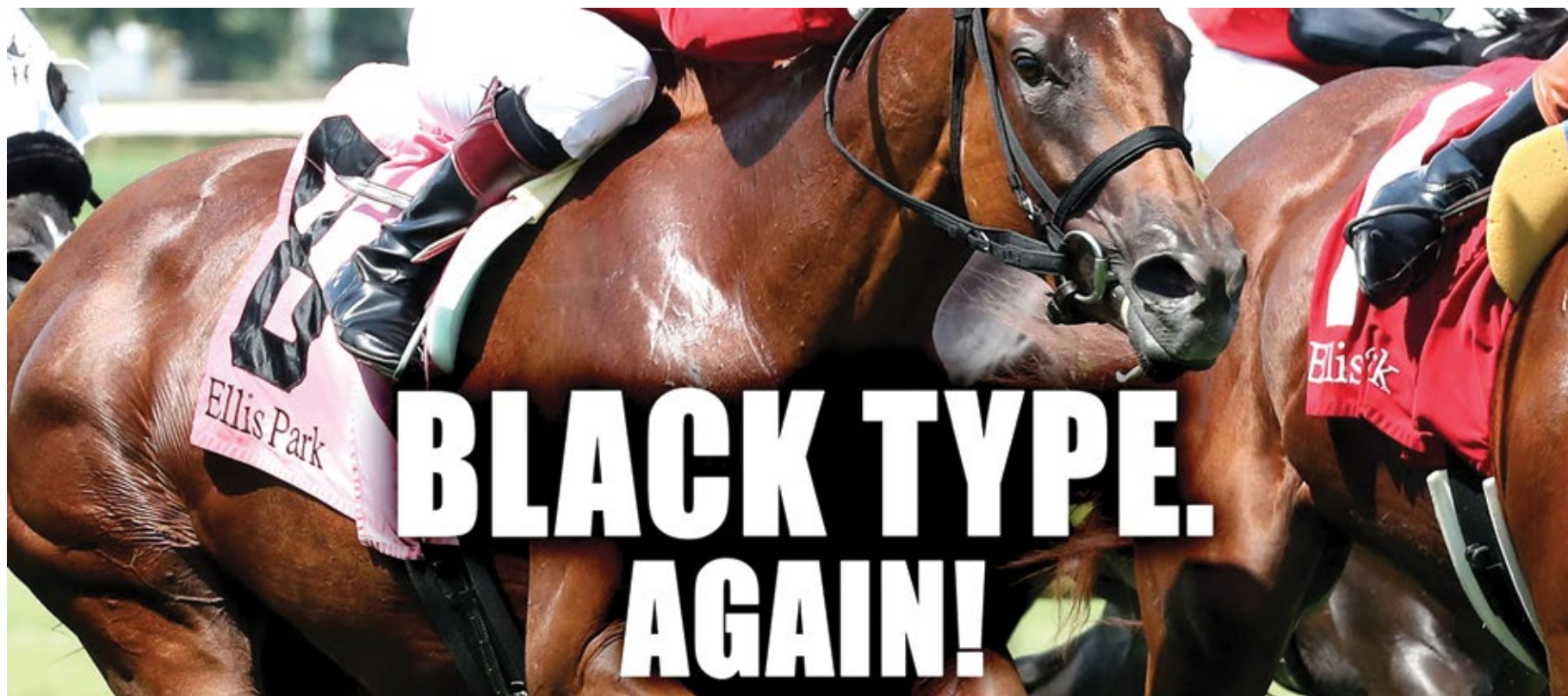
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TRISKELION Wins the \$175,000 Pea Patch Stakes
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Congratulations to all the connections!

2026 Sires by % BT Winners

Updated: July 6, 2026 10:06 AM | Data provided by [equineline.com](https://www.equineline.com)

Rank	Sire	2026 Stud Fee / Farm	Named Foals	Bt Wins / Bt %	Bt Wins / % Bt	CD Wins / C/V Wins	Chief Earner (Earnings)	Progeny Earnings (Avg. Earnings per line)
1	Leinster Majestic Warrior (2015)	\$7,500 Mountain View Farm, NY	54	30 / 13	3 / 10.0%	6 / 20.0%	0 / 0 Lennila (\$142,265)	\$944,707 (\$31,490)
2	Redesdale Speightstown (2013)	Moved	95	17 / 6	1 / 5.9%	2 / 11.8%	0 / 0 Sculcos Folly (\$337,090)	\$712,818 (\$41,930)
3	Honest Mischief Into Mischief (2016)	\$7,500 Sequel Stallions New York, NY	167	53 / 17	3 / 5.7%	6 / 11.3%	0 / 0 Walk Away Kaye (\$142,974)	\$1,342,430 (\$25,329)
4	War Dancer War Front (2010)	Private Mill Creek Farm, NY	270	44 / 11	2 / 4.5%	2 / 4.5%	0 / 0 Twenty Six Black (\$170,000)	\$859,021 (\$19,523)
5	Buccherio Kantharos (2012)	\$12,500 Ironhorse Stallions, NY	251	113 / 48	3 / 2.7%	6 / 5.3%	2 / 0 Book'em Danno (\$290,000)	\$2,330,901 (\$20,627)
6	Solomini Curtin (2015)	\$7,500 McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds, NY	220	89 / 36	2 / 2.2%	5 / 5.6%	0 / 0 Helen's Revenge (\$170,350)	\$2,592,834 (\$29,133)
7	Central Banker Speightstown (2010)	\$7,500 McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds, NY	537	99 / 32	1 / 1.0%	7 / 7.1%	0 / 0 Hot Currency (\$165,400)	\$1,838,270 (\$18,568)

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THURSDAY SARATOGA ENTRIES

Thursday, July 16.

1ST (1:10PM). \$75,000, STK - THE JONATHAN KISER MEMORIAL STAKES, 4 YO'S & UP, 2 3/8M (HURDLE)
Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double

1	1	Mr Percy (IRE)	G. Watters	N. Morris	9-2
2	2	Morning March	F. Procter	K. Neilson	8-1
3	3	Cyber Ninja	J. Bargary	J. Fisher	7-2
4	4	Doctor Love (FR)	E. Dwan	T. Garner	10-1
5	5	Lynches Knock (IRE)	C. Tierney	R. Hendriks	8-1
6	6	Famous Figure (IRE)	J. Kennedy	R. Hendriks	2-1
7	7	Lord Flintshire	S. Mulqueen	K. Brion	6-1
8	8	Vintage Year	D. Nevin	J. Fisher	12-1

2ND (1:48PM). \$100,000, MSW, 3 YO'S & UP, 1M
Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 5, Daily Double, Quinella

1	1	Bakuto	J. Rodriguez	H. De Paz	15-1
2	2	Term Premium	F. Prat	C. Brown	2-1
3	3	Bubster	R. Santana, Jr.	B. Levine	8-1
4	4	Irish Goodbye	M. Franco	B. Cox	5-2
5	5	Roadie	I. Ortiz, Jr.	T. Pletcher	6-1
6	6	In Front Runner	J. Ortiz	A. Sano	4-1
7	7	Tuning In	E. Zayas	H. Bond	6-1

3RD (2:22PM). \$45,000, SOC \$16,000-\$12,500, 4 YO'S & UP, 7F
Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 4, Daily Double

1	1	Metatron's Muse	S. Gonzalez	M. Kantarmaci	6-1
2	2	Smilensaycheese	R. Gutierrez	E. DeLauro	20-1
3	3	Sin Nombre	K. Davis	J. Romero	12-1
4	4	Kunshan Bridge	M. Franco	M. Kantarmaci	8-1
5	5	Tizmarkus	R. Santana, Jr.	J. Ferraro	5-2
6	6	Lucky Dude	K. Carmouche	J. Kirby	3-1
7	7	Screaming Uncle	R. Silvera	G. Charlerie	8-1
8	8	Thrill of It	J. Rodriguez	J. Ferraro	10-1
9	9	Princip	I. Ortiz, Jr.	W. Potts	5-1

4TH (2:56PM). \$75,000, MCL \$100,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 1M (INNER TURF)
Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 6, Daily Double, Quinella

1	1	Arabian Power	I. Ortiz, Jr.	B. Cox	7-2
2	2	Alghero	F. Prat	C. Brown	8-1
3	3	Alley Oop	J. Alvarado	T. Morley	20-1
4	4	He's a Piper	E. Zayas	M. Casse	10-1
5	5	Asked and Answered	J. Ortiz	A. Arriaga	8-1
6	6	Chester Boy	M. Franco	M. Clement	3-1
7	7	Mount Sopris	K. Carmouche	T. Proctor	10-1
8	8	Minotaur	L. Saez	D. Gargan	12-1
9	9	Franklin Delano	J. Velazquez	T. Pletcher	5-2
10	AE-MTO	Stream It	I. Ortiz, Jr.	L. Rice	8-5
11	AE-MTO	Disparate Impact	D. Davis	C. Brown	9-2
12	AE-MTO	Regeneration	F. Prat	C. Brown	7-2

5TH (3:30PM). \$115,000, MSW, 2 YO, F , 5 1/2F (TURF)
Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 5, Daily Double

1	1	Beach Life	J. Velazquez	T. Pletcher	5-1
2	2	Sweet Lisa	M. Franco	L. Rice	6-1
3	3	All Star Leigh	J. Ortiz	A. Dutrow	7-2
4	4	J'ray's Jewel	J. Alvarado	W. Mott	9-2
5	5	Seismic Activity	D. Davis	J. Englehart	8-1
6	6	I'm Not Kidding	E. Zayas	B. Brown	8-1
7	7	Sweet Grace	C. Elliott	J. Ryerson	15-1
8	8	Champagne in Paris	R. Gutierrez	M. Giddings	12-1
9	9	Sitting On a Win	F. Prat	M. Maker	6-1
10	10	Tappin Magic	T. Gaffalione	E. Barker	15-1
11	AE	Miss Money Pants	R. Silvera	R. Rodriguez	30-1
12	AE	Mc Cruiser	K. Carmouche	D. Gargan	8-1
13	AE	Extravaganzoo	T. Gaffalione	G. Weaver	4-1
14	AE	Blessednotbothered	J. Rodriguez	M. Ferraro	8-1
15	AE	Saint Dymphna	R. Santana, Jr.	D. Heath	15-1
16	AE	The Paper Lady	D. Davis	J. Ferraro	12-1

6TH (4:04PM). \$115,000, MSW, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M , 1 1/8M
Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 4, Daily Double

1	1	Morning Menace	F. Prat	C. Brown	6-1
2	2	Prairie Princess	M. Franco	C. Brown	12-1
3	3	Full of Tact	K. Carmouche	G. Rodriguez	15-1
4	4	Ati Girl	I. Ortiz, Jr.	W. Mott	5-2
5	5	Moonlit	J. Rodriguez	M. Clement	9-2
6	6	Pippa Adds	J. Ortiz	T. Pletcher	3-1
7	7	Jadorlinija	R. Santana, Jr.	M. Clement	6-1
8	8	Raghba	J. Velazquez	T. Pletcher	6-1

7TH (4:38PM). \$55,000, CLM \$35,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 1 1/16M (INNER TURF)
Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double

1	1	Roscommon	C. Elliott	D. Ryan	30-1
2	2	English Law	F. Prat	W. Walden	7-2
3	3	Bold Love	T. Gaffalione	B. Brown	15-1
4	4	Blame It On K J	J. Rodriguez	D. Duggan	20-1
5	5	Take a Stance	R. Santana, Jr.	M. Nevin	15-1
6	6	Vintage Vino	I. Ortiz, Jr.	L. Rice	4-1
7	7	Ciro di Marzio	J. Alvarado	W. Ward	5-2
8	8	Sicilian Defense	J. Ortiz	C. DeVaux	9-2
9	9	Royal Browne	R. Silvera	F. Abreu	12-1
10	10	Coach Case	D. Davis	M. Clement	8-1
11	AE	Chips and Fish	M. Franco	A. Arriaga	30-1
12	AE-MTO	Corvus	F. Prat	I. Kantarmaci	6-1
13	AE-MTO	I'm Worthy	K. Carmouche	L. Rice	2-1

8TH (5:12PM). \$78,000, SOC \$75,000, 3 YO, 1M
Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Daily Double

1	1	Into the Light	D. Davis	R. Dutrow, Jr.	6-1
2	2	Swiss Army Knife	M. Franco	F. Abreu	12-1
3	3	Life Is Gravy (IRE)	T. Gaffalione	C. Summers	6-1
4	4	Exhibition Only	R. Silvera	R. Rodriguez	6-1
5	5	Gethsemane	J. Ortiz	L. Rice	4-1
6	6	Max Money	R. Santana, Jr.	M. Maker	7-2
7	7	Palacios	I. Ortiz, Jr.	W. Walden	5-2
8	8	Micanopy	J. Rodriguez	M. Simone	15-1

9TH (5:46PM). \$56,000, MCL \$50,000, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M , 1 1/16M (TURF)
Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta

1	1	Intothewilderness	I. Ortiz, Jr.	C. Baker	4-1
2	2	Sky Low Low	K. Davis	A. DeVaux	20-1
3	3	Valiant Diva	R. Silvera	T. Morley	8-1
4	4	Tank Girl	C. Gonzalez	R. Metivier	50-1
5	5	Ready Rosie Jane	J. Davis	N. Zito	30-1
6	6	Roasted Reds	F. Prat	J. Abreu	3-1
7	7	Zelena	L. Saez	M. Nevin	6-1
8	8	Ms Nikki D	E. Zayas	J. Ferraro	30-1
9	9	Whatta Weekend	J. Rodriguez	D. Duggan	5-1
10	10	Two Clicks	R. Gutierrez	B. Levine	10-1
11	11	Mia Sophia	R. Santana, Jr.	E. DeLauro	20-1
12	12	Island Charm	M. Franco	I. Kantarmaci	5-1
13	AE	Force of Mischief	D. Davis	D. Donk	9-2
14	AE	Serena Fly	C. Elliott	R. Breed, Jr.	30-1
15	AE	Not Tapping	E. Zayas	T. Morley	10-1
16	AE-MTO	My Devine One	A. Murgia	I. Kantarmaci	12-1

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The
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Grid

Race	 Tom Law	 John Shapazian	 Charles Bedard	 Rob Whitlock	 Jessica Paquette
1	Cyber Ninja Mr Percy Famous Figure	Famous Figure Lord Flintshire Cyber Ninja	Vintage Year Morning March Mr Percy	Lynches Knock Lord Flintshire Cyber Ninja	Mr Percy Lord Flintshire Vintage Year
2	Term Premium Irish Goodbye Bakuto	Term Premium Roadie Irish Goodbye	Irish Goodbye Term Premium Bubster	Irish Goodbye Term Premium In Front Runner	Term Premium Irish Goodbye Bakuto
3	Tizmarkus Lucky Dude Princip	Tizmarkus Lucky Dude Thrill Of It	Sin Nombre Thrill Of It Lucky Dude	Tizmarkus Kunshan Bridge Lucky Dude	Lucky Dude Metatron's Muse Kunshan Bridge
4	Arabian Power Chester Boy Franklin Delano	Arabian Power Chester Boy Franklin Delano	Asked And Answered Arabian Power Minotaur	Chester Boy He's A Piper Arabian Power	Arabian Power Alley Oop Franklin Delano
5	J'ray's Jewel Seismic Activity Sitting On A Win	All Star Leigh J'ray's Jewel Beach Life	J'ray's Jewel Beach Life Seismic Activity	J'rays Jewel I'm Not Kidding All Star Leigh	Beach Life Sitting On A Win J'ray's Jewel
6	Ati Girl Raghba Jadorlinija	Pippa Adds Moonlit Raghba	Prairie Princess Pippa Adds Jadorlinija	Ati Girl Pippa Adds Moonlit	Moonlit Raghba Pippa Adds
7	Royal Browne English Law Bold Love	Ciro di Marzio English Law Vintage Vino	Vintage Vino Ciro di Marzio Bold Love	English Law Bold Love Coach Case	Blame It On K J Coach Case Sicilian Defense
8	Gethsemane Swiss Army Knife Life Is Gravy	Palacios Gethsemane Max Money	Gethsemane Palacios Into The Light	Palacios Into The Light Gethsemane	Into The Light Palacios Life Is Gravy
9	Valiant Diva Roasted Reds Zelena	Intothewilderness Roasted Reds Zelena	Force Of Mischief Two Clicks Zelena	Intothewilderness Valiant Diva Zelena	Roasted Reds Valiant Diva Whatta Weekend
2026 Records	14/70, -\$48.44	18/70, -\$40.68	15/70, -\$36.38	14/70, -\$31.66	8/70, -\$82.94

Records include wins by top selections plus ROI on \$2 win bet on top selections. Race totals may vary if all three selections scratch.

Drive for 5

NY-bred champ Awesome Czech eyes another Saratoga triumph

BY TOM LAW

DE LA ROSE STAKES PREVIEW

Horacio De Paz knows Awesome Czech likes, maybe even loves, Saratoga.

The 5-year-old New York-bred mare's record backs up that sentiment, a ledger of four wins in five starts with the lone defeat a solid third in a pace-less stakes race last spring.

Last year's champion New York-bred turf female makes her return to Saratoga Race Course Friday and a not-so-unfamiliar jump back into open company against eight others in the featured \$150,000 De La Rose Stakes. De Paz hoped the Mendelssohn mare's return would have come earlier in the Mount Vernon Stakes during the Belmont Stakes Racing

Festival – the same race where she finished third last year behind Spinning Colors and Silver Skillet – but Barry Schwartz's homebred missed the race.

"I had her entered here in the stakes against New York-breds and she tied up on us," De Paz said Tuesday. "We haven't really gotten into a good cruise. Right now, she's training very forwardly, she's been really good, so hopefully she can have a good performance and then go to the New York-bred stakes from there. ... She does like Saratoga."

Awesome Czech won "the New

Continued On Page 31



Samantha Decker

Awesome Czech eyes her fifth Saratoga win in Friday's De La Rose.

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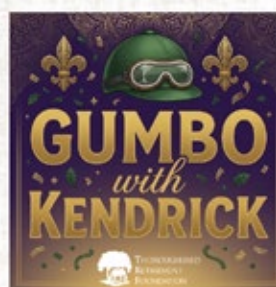
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De La Rose -

■ Continued from page 30

York-bred stakes” last year, the \$150,000 Yaddo, late in the meet to put her championship run in motion. She added the Ticonderoga on Empire Showcase Day and placed in the Athenia at Aqueduct and Cardinal at Churchill Downs against open company to lock it down.

She's won six of 21 starts, with her two outs this year a third in a \$100,000 handicap on Gulfstream Park's synthetic track and a wide sixth in the Grade 3 Galorette Stakes on the Preakness Day undercard at Laurel Park.

De Paz likes where Awesome Czech is heading into her fourth summer in Saratoga.

“She's doing really well,” he said. “We tried to get her into the Pegasus race [Pegasus Filly and Mare Turf] down in Florida, but she didn't draw in because nobody scratched. We ended up running her on the synthetic because we were there, and it wasn't a bad third, but she really didn't like it. Then we gave her some time off and it just took us awhile to get her back. The race in Maryland, she just needed the race. It wasn't bad.”

Awesome Czech and regular rider Ricardo Santana are 6-1 on the morning line for the 1-mile De La Rose, restricted to fillies and mares which have not won a graded stakes in 2025-26.

Chad Brown sends out the 3-1 favorite Sandtrap for Bridlewood Farm. A 4-year-old Irish-bred daughter of Lope de Vega, Sandtrap finished sixth in the Grade 1 Just A Game last time out on Belmont Stakes Day. Flavien

Prat rides for the first time.

Two others that finished ahead of Sandtrap in the Just A Game – Deep Satin (fourth) and And One More Time (fifth) – are also in the De La Rose field.

Mark Casse trains And One More Time for Live Oak Plantation and she won the Plenty Of Grace two starts back at Aqueduct. Cherie DeVaux sends out Deep Satin, winner of a division of last year's De La Rose Stakes, for John Gunther and Eurowest Bloodstock.

Lisa Bartkowski takes a similar approach to De Paz with Hilly Fields Stable's homebred New York-bred Being Betty. Bartkowski also hopes to use the De La Rose as a springboard to the Yaddo for the 5-year-old Weekend Hideaway mare.

“It's the exact perfect prep race,” Bartkowski said Tuesday. “I see this as a no-lose situation. We want to see if she's good enough to compete against open company. She's beat open horses in allowance races. We want to see if she's good enough to beat stakes-caliber open horses, but at the same time it's her distance and the nice New York-bred stakes is in five or six weeks. She loves a mile, she loves the turf course here. It's a win-win proposition for us.”

Being Betty, 20-1 on the morning line with Luis Saez named to ride, has won three of four starts this season.

Sally Seniorita, Hang The Moon, Table Flirt, Long Ago and Proctor Street are also entered in the De La Rose, while Scalable, Bernietake-charge, With The Angels and Going Steady are entered for the main track only.

- Additional reporting
by Darby O'Brien



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FRIDAY SARATOGA ENTRIES

Friday, July 17.

1ST (1:10PM). \$115,000, MSW, 3 YO'S & UP, 5 1/2F (TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 5, Daily Double			
1	1	Shirl's Soul Town.....	J. Ortiz.....L. Rice.....12-1
2	2	Red Square.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....W. Ward.....8-5
3	3	Beijing.....	F. Prat.....W. Walden.....4-1
4	4	Onepac.....	E. Zayas.....J. Terranova II.....20-1
5	5	He's My Kind.....	M. Franco.....M. Clement.....3-1
6	6	Blazing Tiger.....	T. Gaffalione.....M. Clement.....9-2
7	7	Frenchquarter Note.....	R. Santana, Jr.....G. Weaver.....6-1

2ND (1:44PM). \$75,000, MCL \$100,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 7F

Exacta, Quinella, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 4, Daily Double			
1	1	Sir Duke.....	T. Gaffalione.....C. Martin.....4-1
2	2	Regeneration.....	F. Prat.....C. Brown.....5-2
3	3	Discotheque.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....J. Sweezey.....3-1
4	4	Old Time Rocknroll.....	D. Davis.....C. Brown.....6-1
5	5	Grand Gesture.....	J. Alvarado.....W. Mott.....6-1
6	6	The Standard.....	J. Ortiz.....S. Asmussen.....4-1
7	7	Sunshine Bobalou.....	C. Gonzalez.....A. Chichakly.....30-1
8	8	Chess Match.....	K. Davis.....E. DeLauro.....30-1

3RD (2:18PM). \$84,000, CLM \$62,500, 4 YO'S & UP, 7F

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double, Pic 5			
1	1	Ridgewood Runner.....	F. Prat.....M. Nevin.....7-2
2	2	Reddington.....	K. Carmouche.....M. Giangiulio.....5-1
3	3	Unlimitedpotential.....	D. Davis.....O. Noda.....4-1
4	4	Two Eagles River.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....J. Sharp.....7-2
5	5	Paradise Valley.....	S. Gonzalez.....I. Kantarmaci.....12-1
6	6	Castle Chaos.....	M. Franco.....I. Kantarmaci.....10-1
7	7	What's Up Bro.....	H. Harkie.....N. Follett.....20-1
8	8	Twenty Four Mamba.....	R. Santana, Jr.....F. Abreu.....3-1

4TH (2:53PM). \$90,000, MSW, 2 YO, F, 5 1/2F

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Quinella, Daily Double, Pic 4			
1	1	Freshly Minted.....	R. Silvera.....R. Rodriguez.....20-1
2	2	Sea Isle City.....	F. Prat.....K. Brion.....8-1
3	3	Belmont C. C.....	L. Saez.....R. Dutrow, Jr.....15-1
4	4	Vu Jade.....	K. Carmouche.....L. Schultz.....12-1
5	5	Lexi's Charm.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....M. Casse.....4-1
6	6	R Kan't Miss.....	T. Gaffalione.....S. Joseph, Jr.....3-1
7	7	Goodproblemtohave.....	J. Rodriguez.....A. Green.....8-1
8	8	Juneau.....	E. Zayas.....K. McPeck.....9-2
9	9	Atlas a Eye.....	M. Franco.....R. Mott.....6-1
10	10	Denos Grace.....	R. Santana, Jr.....D. Beckman.....10-1

5TH (3:28PM). \$110,000, AOC \$45,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 5 1/2F (TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 6, Daily Double			
1	1	Boston's Phinest.....	J. Ortiz.....B. Brown.....5-1
2	2	Projectability.....	R. Santana, Jr.....L. Rice.....8-1
3	3	Graywing.....	F. Villa Pino.....E. Jones.....50-1
4	4	Disarmed.....	R. Silvera.....R. Rodriguez.....15-1
5	5	Twisted Filigree.....	M. Franco.....G. Weaver.....2-1
6	6	Vacation Dance.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....B. Cox.....5-2
7	7	Funny Factor.....	F. Prat.....W. Walden.....6-1
8	8	Courtly Banker.....	K. Davis.....B. Tagg.....5-1
9	AE-MTO	Party in the Army.....	K. Carmouche.....J. Englehart.....5-2
10	AE-MTO	Anyway.....	M. Franco.....L. Rice.....3-1
11	AE-MTO	Jackson Heights.....	S. Gonzalez.....I. Kantarmaci.....10-1
12	AE-MTO	Kid Billy.....	Rider TBA.....R. Rodriguez.....8-1
13	AE-MTO	New York Scrappy.....	F. Prat.....I. Kantarmaci.....4-1
14	AE-MTO	Beary Funny.....	Rider TBA.....R. Rodriguez.....12-1

6TH (4:04PM). \$125,000, AOC \$80,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 1 3/8M (INNER TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 5, Daily Double			
1	1	Waitlist.....	J. Rodriguez.....L. Rice.....30-1
2	2	Right to Vote.....	M. Franco.....C. Brown.....5-1
3	3	Arkipov.....	F. Prat.....C. Brown.....7-2
4	4	Emergence.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....B. Cox.....9-2
5	5	Mayor of Midnight (IRE).....	J. Velazquez.....R. Mott.....6-1
6	6	Gilded Craken.....	J. Ortiz.....J. Sharp.....6-1
7	7	End of Romance (IRE).....	L. Saez.....H. Motion.....8-1
8	8	The Hidden Chamber.....	E. Zayas.....K. Danner.....12-1
9	9	Noble Confessor.....	T. Gaffalione.....T. Pletcher.....6-1
10	10	Passing Game.....	K. Carmouche.....R. Hendriks.....15-1
11	AE	Harrow.....	D. Davis.....S. Joseph, Jr.....8-1
12	AE	Britain's Kitten.....	R. Santana, Jr.....A. Rice.....8-1
13	AE	Mutaawid.....	F. Prat.....B. Cox.....5-1
14	AE-MTO	Just a Fair Shake.....	L. Saez.....J. Sweezey.....15-1
15	AE-MTO	Dreamlike.....	M. Franco.....L. Rice.....5-2
16	AE-MTO	Georgia Magic.....	J. Rodriguez.....S. Schauer.....7-2

7TH (4:37PM). \$42,000, CLM \$20,000, 3 YO'S & UP, 1 1/8M

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Pic 4, Daily Double			
1	1	Antietam.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....L. Rice.....5-2
2	2	Whitby.....	J. Alvarado.....M. Hennig.....8-1
3	3	You're Lookin Good.....	J. Ortiz.....A. Green.....8-1
4	4	Magnum's Macrobrst.....	D. Rivera.....D. Donk.....15-1
5	5	Uncle Barrie.....	C. Gonzalez.....R. Metivier.....30-1
6	6	Reside.....	K. Davis.....W. Potts.....15-1
7	7	Geostoblame.....	K. Carmouche.....T. Pletcher.....3-1
8	8	First Pitch.....	J. Rodriguez.....J. Jimenez.....20-1
9	9	Mirage.....	R. Santana, Jr.....N. Casse.....2-1

8TH (5:11PM). \$73,000, CLM \$40,000, 4 YO'S & UP, 1 1/16M (TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Pic 3, Daily Double			
1	1	Classic Creation.....	D. Davis.....J. Terranova II.....15-1
2	2	Ice Chocolat (BRZ).....	J. Ortiz.....M. Casse.....7-2
3	3	Belouni (FR).....	J. Rodriguez.....J. Abreu.....6-1
4	4	Beef Winslow.....	T. Gaffalione.....R. Hess, Jr.....3-1
5	5	Heathguard.....	J. Alvarado.....R. Lerman.....12-1
6	6	Presider.....	M. Franco.....M. Kantarmaci.....12-1
7	7	Santorini.....	F. Prat.....M. Maker.....5-1
8	8	Treaty Obligation.....	R. Silvera.....R. Rodriguez.....20-1
9	9	Lou.....	C. Elliott.....M. Mann.....30-1
10	10	Ocean Atlantique.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....J. Sharp.....4-1
11	AE-MTO	Ambition.....	M. Franco.....I. Kantarmaci.....15-1
12	AE-MTO	Inexorable.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....L. Rice.....2-1
13	AE-MTO	Pineapple Man.....	Rider TBA.....M. Nevin.....8-1
14	AE-MTO	Three Technique.....	E. Zayas.....M. Kantarmaci.....10-1
15	AE-MTO	Power Seeker.....	R. Silvera.....R. Rodriguez.....6-1
16	AE-MTO	Brazenly.....	Rider TBA.....C. Englehart.....7-2



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FRIDAY SARATOGA ENTRIES

9TH (5:45PM). \$150,000, STK - THE DE LA ROSE, 4 YO'S & UP, F & M , 1M (INNER TURF)

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta, Daily Double

1	1	Salty Seniorita.....	E. Zayas.....	M. Maker.....	30-1
2	2	Hang the Moon.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	S. Joseph, Jr.....	8-1
3	3	And One More Time.....	J. Velazquez.....	M. Casse.....	4-1
4	4	Sandtrap (IRE).....	F. Prat.....	C. Brown.....	3-1
5	5	Table Flirt.....	J. Alvarado.....	W. Mott.....	20-1
6	6	Long Ago (GB).....	K. Carmouche.....	W. Morey.....	12-1
7	7	Proctor Street.....	T. Gaffalione.....	B. Walsh.....	4-1
8	8	Awesome Czech.....	R. Santana, Jr.....	H. De Paz.....	6-1
9	9	Deep Satin.....	J. Ortiz.....	C. DeVaux.....	5-1
10	10	Being Betty.....	L. Saez.....	L. Bartkowski.....	20-1
11	AE-MTO	Scalable.....	Rider TBA.....	T. Pletcher.....	5-2
12	AE-MTO	Bernietakescharge.....	M. Franco.....	D. Schettino.....	4-1
13	AE-MTO	With the Angels.....	J. Ortiz.....	L. Rice.....	3-1
14	AE-MTO	Going Steady.....	J. Alvarado.....	R. Medina.....	12-1

10TH (6:19PM). \$42,000, CLM \$20,000, 3 YO'S & UP, F & M , 6 1/2F

Exacta, Trifecta, Superfecta

1	1	Gresham's Law.....	D. Rivera.....	D. Donk.....	30-1
2	2	Donna Romano.....	I. Ortiz, Jr.....	B. Cox.....	2-1
3	3	Furry Fox.....	K. Carmouche.....	R. Samsundar.....	20-1
4	4	Tenacious Child.....	F. Prat.....	G. Weaver.....	3-1
5	5	Lady Delilah.....	R. Santana, Jr.....	J. Ferraro.....	15-1
6	6	Undergrad.....	M. Franco.....	L. Rice.....	10-1
7	7	St. Brigid's Cross.....	D. Davis.....	M. Miceli.....	12-1
8	8	Will of a Womanne.....	E. Zayas.....	J. Ferraro.....	12-1
9	9	Olivia's Grace.....	C. Elliott.....	M. Giddings.....	6-1
10	10	Kay Road.....	R. Silvera.....	F. Abreu.....	6-1
11	11	Admiral Sol.....	K. Davis.....	T. Housel.....	30-1

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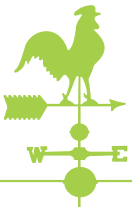
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My Special Saratoga

BY JANE HILL

The calendar rolls around. It's June. A couple of texts are exchanged. "See you soon," and anticipation builds. The older I get, the faster Saratoga comes around again.

As married couples go, we are frequently together, and we have rules and rituals that minimize conflict. Heading to Saratoga to play the races is no exception.

We've refined our methodology over the last 25 years. There is a list of crucial gear to pack.

The PPs are printed at home, but ONLY if the post position numbers are available. Laser printer in the car? Check. That heavy duty stapler and staples? Yup. You've got to be able to staple those thick Saturday cards as one unit.

Staying in Albany means saving money and bankroll, but it also means travel time.

The alarm is set for 8 a.m. to allow time for a hearty breakfast in Latham before heading north. That breakfast needs to last all day.

With luck, we park on East Avenue. Hit Gate A about a minute or two after it opens, give a hearty hello to the lovely lady in the booth whose son is going to graduate this year and scan the pass.

Striding to our "neighborhood," we stake our claim in the usual spot. It's hardly prime real estate, but it's not without its admirers. Under the grandstand, down by the steps up to the security office, behind that tent that used to struggle to find an identity – it's the Saratoga boonies. It couldn't look bleaker. Grimy, worn red seats – cast off from Aqueduct years ago – and second-string TVs. It's our slum, and it's home. Cherished turf that has borne witness to the birth of a track "family," a fellowship of the hopeful, that grows by accretion year after year.

We saw each other for years in the 00s, nodding and smiling and eavesdropping in hopes of picking up a name, or the name of a pick.

One year it was suddenly the right time to share who we were, where we were from. The "who do you like?" chatter evolved to include sharing of frustration at field size, rides and prices. Years rolled by. Handicapping hits and blunders are banded about as we roam to the apron and back again to study. Over time, the spot fires of hot-blooded frustration and bursts of sincere celebration forged real ties between us.

Did you have it?

Nice.

You?

GUEST COLUMN

Too bad.

Get 'em next time.

Turn the page.

Oh geez.

Another maiden race.

Let's go watch 'em walk in.

Rituals are noted and respected, as are favorite locations. All it takes is a quick glance to know Dave needs some space. Jim hasn't finished going through the sheets yet. And don't look for Andy at his chair until closer to post; he's by the horse path with his PPs, cooling off and greeting the next field coming over from the backstretch, looking for a turf hoof. Dapples galore on the nine. That crew is dressed up today. Interesting.

About 20 years ago I started to make a calendar from the pictures I took from the stretch and around the track. One year I made extras and mailed them to a few stalwarts. Today my list keeps lengthening, but I welcome that. It's a labor of love. It keeps us in touch. New Jersey, Connecticut, Syracuse, Canajoharie, Springfield, Troy, Fort Edward, Clifton Park, Voorheesville, Saratoga Springs. As we relive the special horses of last year, we turn our thoughts to next July.

Last year there was talk of our gritty area being renovated into a restaurant for the posh day-trippers. When we arrived this year and saw the same dirty red chairs, Jim's rocks-turned-paperweights



Good opinions abound.

still there at the foot of the grandstand riser, and a generally spectacular lack of progress in improving our neighborhood, we breathed a collective sigh of relief. It's OK as is. It suits us fine.

Time to relax and enjoy another year of fellowship and get to know each other even better.

The friends I've made by talking through picks, commiserating over trips and battling head-to-head in the Low Roller are as varied as this year's flavors at Stewart's. It's always reassuring to come around the corner from the apron and see everyone's heads down over the next race. If they have hope, why shouldn't I?

Sometimes I need a freshening and stay home for a weekend. The thing is, though – there aren't any Breeders' Cup or Triple Crown runners to be found in my backyard.

Hey, did you remember to put the camera in the car?

Jane Hill, a guest handicapper in The Saratoga Special way back when, has been a Saratoga regular since 2001. Sadly, Jane reported after she submitted this column that one of the members of her crew passed away June 30.

"His name was Walter (aka Wal-ly.) He sported a cigar, a distinctive gait and a propensity for playing the 4. He will be toasted in perpetuity, and his numbers boxed with some regularity, in tribute."



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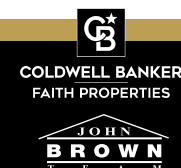
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for Jackpot Farm team

BY JOE CLANCY

Terry Green sat with bloodstock advisors John Gray, Susan Montanye and Bobby Powell at last year's Keeneland September yearling sale as the price of a Yaupon colt they targeted ticked upward.

"We had a number we thought we were going to go to, and it got a little bit north of that," said Gray, general manager of Green's Jackpot Farm in Lexington, Ky.

Outbid for the moment, Green flashed a, "Well, should we keep going?" look.

"Susan punched him in his left arm, and I punched in his right arm," said Gray. "Bobby couldn't reach him but said, 'Hit him once for me too.'"

Green took the cues, went back to bidding and the Indiana-bred joined the Jackpot team for \$325,000. Ten months later, the dark bay named Booked has proven to be worth the short-term pain with a maiden win at Saratoga Race Course June 7 and then a victory in Saratoga's historic Sanford Stakes July 4.

Everybody laughs about the beginning now.

"I got bruised up a little bit on that one," Green said last week. "I went a little further than I was supposed to, but that tends to happen with horses you like."

There was plenty to like with Booked. Bred by Peace of Heaven Thoroughbreds, he brought sirepower as a son of 2025's leading first-crop sire Yaupon. Dam Fingerprint's first two foals to race were stakes-placed allowance winner Zadorsky and debut winner Tre Italiani.

Gray tried not to factor that into his early evaluation, focusing instead on conformation, walk, presence at the Vinery Sales consignment though in this case he knew the stallion.



Sam Decker

Booked heads to victory in the Sanford Stakes at Saratoga Race Course July 4.

"I make it a habit to not look at the page before I look at a horse, because I don't want to be influenced," he said. "I looked at him and said, 'He looks like somebody and it's not necessarily Yaupon.' I looked at the catalog and said, 'There it is.'"

An unraced daughter of Competitive Edge, Fingerprint is out of the Rock Hard Ten mare Miss Super Quick and that's the influence Gray noticed. A distant second to Smarty Jones in the 2004 Preakness, Rock Hard Ten later won five graded stakes including the 2005 Santa Anita Handicap while turning heads with his size and physical makeup. Initially retired to Lane's End Farm, the son of Kris S. became a stallion in South Korea where he died in 2021.

"I know he didn't really turn out as a stallion, but Rock Hard Ten was a gorgeous horse and mixed with the Yaupon, they're pretty enough as it is, but I could see the size coming from Rock Hard Ten," said Gray. "Then the thing that got me was his walk. He just looked like an absolute athlete."

Gray put the colt on a short list with several others and sent Powell for a second opinion on the

group. The response about Hip 1100 was quick, and definitive.

"You can keep those others, I'll keep that one," Powell told Gray.

Montanye agreed with the assessment and got further confirmation when the horse went to her in Florida for early prep work. Booked kept answering questions and joined trainer Steve Asmussen, who won the Grade 1 Hopeful with the Jackpot-owned Basin (also a Keeneland September graduate) in 2019. Booked made his debut in a field of six first-time starters at Churchill Downs April 28. Sent off as the even-money favorite, he was last after a quarter-mile in :22.29 before passing everyone but the Wesley Ward-trained filly Fanshell Beach to finish second.

She went to Royal Ascot and finished fifth in the 21-runner Norfolk Stakes June 20 while Booked shipped to Saratoga. He throttled eight foes in a 5 1/2-furlong maiden June 7 and was even better in the Sanford, a race that dates to 1913 and counts

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Keeneland -

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Triple Crown winners Secretariat and Affirmed among its previous winners.

Breaking from the rail, Booked made the lead through a quarter in :21.96, and led by a length after a half-mile in :45.64. He poured it on from there, winning by 6 lengths for jockey Ricardo Santana Jr. while repeating Obliteration's triumph in the race last year for Asmussen.

Green, Gray and the Jackpot team celebrated the Independence Day win back home in Kentucky and took calls from the partners.

"Normally I don't take on that many but they're some buddies of mine from the cutting-horse world, who said they'd love to buy a race-horse someday," said Green. "The moral of the story is beginner's luck. They're all great guys and are super excited. It added to the pressure a little bit because you hate to buy one with your buddies and have it not turn out. As far as I'm concerned, we're already successful."

Green co-owns Gulfside Casino Partnership, owner/operator of Island View Casino Resort in Gulfport, Miss., and has long been a

participant in cutting-horse competitions as an owner and rider. Jackpot Ranch's Quarter Horse Minkish won the National Cutting Horse Association Futurity – the Kentucky Derby of the sport – in 2025. Green met Thoroughbred owner/breeder Mike Rutherford through the cutting-horse world and eventually bought into Rutherford-bred Mississippi Delta who won four stakes and earned \$731,638 before selling for \$700,000 as a broodmare prospect in 2017.

"Mike is a legend in this deal for me," said Green. "I loved horses, speed horses, but had never been around the Thoroughbreds. I liked it and thought I'd get into it a little bit."

Or a big bit. Green bought a former

cattle farm off Greenwich Pike just north of Lexington near the Bourbon County line, hired Gray, built barns, paddocks, houses, even a small private golf course. The first horses arrived on the farm in November 2019, and the broodmare band is up to 17. Jackpot sells most of the foals, while buying young horses at sales to fuel the racing stable.

"I like the trade part of it, I love the trade, I've always been a trade kind of guy," said Green. "I like to buy the mares, re-breed them, sell them, buy yearlings or weanlings and try to raise them up and sell them or race them. We do a little bit of everything, and it's a team. I have so much respect for John, Bobby and Susan. I respect all

of their horsemanship and their eyes for horses."

And their punching power.

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Opening Day

“What happened to The Saratoga Special?”

Vince Bonanni’s text blasted across my phone Saturday afternoon, somewhere and sometime between picking up Miles at Governor’s School in Western Virginia and the Virginia Bolts playing ball at James Madison High School in Northern Virginia. I wasn’t exactly watching Saratoga or worrying about what happened to The Saratoga Special as Miles fought back tears after a three-week stint of summer school and pitched three scoreless innings of the doubleheader.

Trying not to react to the cold, hard, contextless, toneless, one-way, abruptness of a text, I paused, composed, drove a thousand more miles, settled into a chair behind a dusty dugout and eventually replied with two words.

“Starts Thursday.”

Immediately, three blinking dots... “Thank you.”

In those two simple words, the context, the tone, the mood changed. From my point of view, anyway. A racing lifer, a longing reader, a concerned friend, looking for the first edition of the paper, that’s better. Way better.

And now it’s Thursday. After five days of the Belmont Stakes Racing Festival and seven days July 3-12, the meet starts for the third time today. At least for The Special. Today is Opening Day. Soft launch, launch, hard launch. Something like that.

And if you were wondering or worrying what happened to The Special this year, nothing happened. Balancing business decisions, an ever-changing/increasing racing schedule and the logistics of life, we opted to wait until the closest thing to a traditional start of the meet. As has been the schedule since Covid, we’ll publish 20 editions. Thursday. Saturday. Thursday. Saturday. Wednesday. Saturday. Wednesday. Friday. Saturday. Sunday. Monday. Tuesday. Wednesday. Saturday. Wednesday. Saturday. Wednesday. Saturday. Wednesday. Saturday. Got it?



By Sean Clancy

And here’s to the opening of Belmont Park this fall to right the ship and return everything to normal by next summer. The new normal, anyway.

Now, let’s roll. Our 26th season starts today.

The meet, the day, the paper starts with the Jonathan Kiser Memorial. As I was driving up I-81 Tuesday on my third trip to Saratoga this summer, Maryland-based trainer Todd Wyatt called, and we talked about the once Maryland-based jockey. As we have done for the past 26 years. There will be weeks, months when we forget, but we always remember when Saratoga and his race roll around.

“We’ve been honoring that kid for 26 years,” Wyatt said. “That’s hard to believe.”

Kiser, a rocket of a jump jockey, died in 2000. The Special, anything but a rocket, started in 2001. Yeah, it’s hard to believe he’s been gone that long, and The Special has been going that long. Kiser would have liked The Special.

“A lot has happened in 26 years,” Wyatt said.

If the text touched a nerve, the call grabbed it and wrenched it in a knot.

The Special started in an out-of-business exercise studio on Broadway. Racing six days a week, publishing six days a week. Creative writers from Skidmore, ads arriving on discs and dial-up Internet bumping and grinding like a rugby scrum. Nobody thought we would make it. Neither did we. We

switched to five days a week halfway through, long after the creative writers had flitted off.

We celebrated when we got Roadrunner. The Paper Lady. Quint Kessenich. Dave Harmon. Tod Marks. Susie Alexander. Bounced to the Arcade Building, the Chamber of Commerce commune and construction projects from Broadway to Union Avenue. About halfway through, Tom Law hopped in the camper van, guaranteeing we would make it – despite Distributiongate – and changing it forever.

A water cooler. A golf cart, then two. Full color. A growing list of interns making it big, our proudest achievement. “Hey, there’s Quint doing college football on ESPN...Travis got the job at Churchill... Gabby’s going to California...Ryan graduated law school...Panagot got hired as an agent...”

Somewhere along the line we moved to the feed store at Fasig-Tipton. A stakeout over the sales grounds, the training track, the degenerates and the drunks. The Park Avenue of Thoroughbred racing.

And our kids. Joey’s boys, the original paper boys, grew up in our pages. Miles, too. A reader once said to me, “You don’t know our kids. You don’t know us. But we know your kids. We know you.” It was the first time I looked at it that way and I’ve measured my words, ever so slightly, ever since.

Point Given won our first Travers. Frankel and Flute. Walking up the stretch after The Chief’s final Grade 1 and walking home with Wise Dan after another one of his. Johnny has been here for all of them, and then some, 26 years and still going strong. Rachel raised the rafters. Maple Leaf Mel dropped us to our knees. And we’ll never forget Garrett Gomez. Carmen Barrera. Christophe, too.

Joe and Sam have a grandson now. Three generations. One newspaper.

And so, yeah, that’s what happened to The Special. And here we go again. Wildfires in the air, the World Cup on mute, the Kiser to open, 39 racing days to go and another season around the sun.



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Keeneland Fall 2026

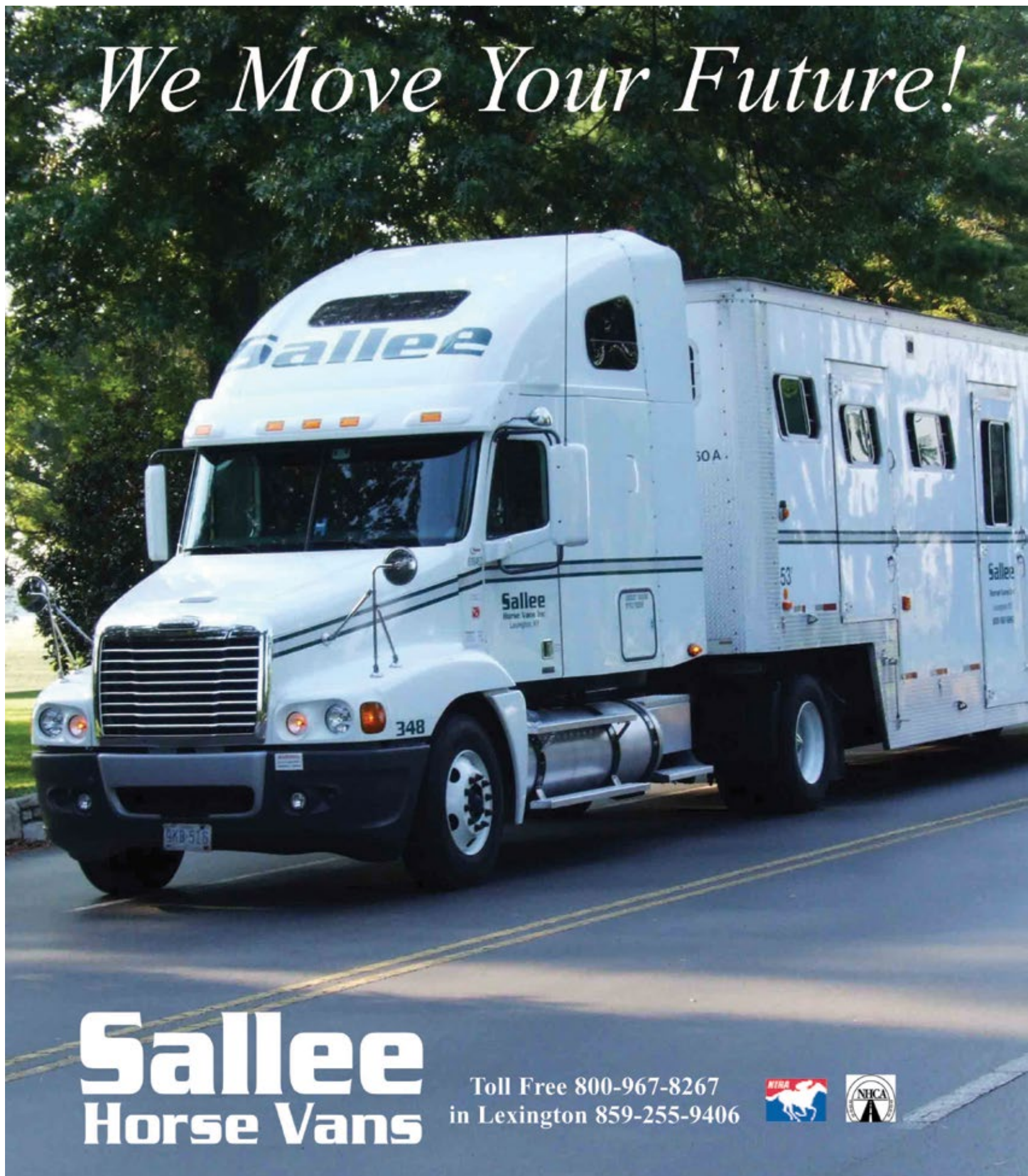


September Yearling Sale | Sept. 14-26
The Keeneland Fall Meet | Oct. 2-24
Championship Sale at the Breeders' Cup | Oct. 28

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November Breeding Stock Sale | Begins Nov. 3
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