

Sunday,
January 8, 2012

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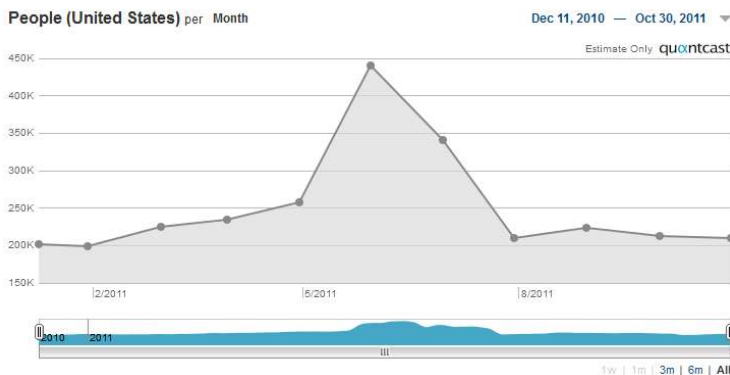
BRUSH and CRUSH

Dean Towers

Does Harness Racing Need a New Triple Crown?

In literally hundreds of racing articles, both standardbred and thoroughbred, we've heard that racing is one of the few sports that doesn't have a season. There seems to be no beginning or end, and those who say that seem to have a strong point.

However, I was doing some office work a few weeks ago and took a look at some internet traffic stats on the bell-wether Daily Racing Form website (DRF.com), via Quantcast.



What we notice is a large spike in traffic and interest starting in late April, and it lasts to about late June. This coincides almost perfectly with Triple Crown. If we go back and look at years past, it's exactly the same. There is a season in thoroughbred racing; the fans are telling you when it begins and ends.

If we pull up the same graphs for harness racing, whether it is website statistics, search terms, or news mentions, we do not see such a spike throughout our calendar. Even storied races like the Little Brown Jug, Hambletonian, or other big money events like the North America Cup barely seem to register in any tangible way.

It can be argued the Triple Crown series in thoroughbred racing keeps that sport on the nation's radar, and has for many years. Handles for the three races (and race cards) can make a track's entire year, and it's one of the few times that the television networks pay racing to show the races, not the other way around.

Is harness racing missing out?

I asked some fans on Twitter if they could name the three races that comprise the Pacing Triple Crown, and only a

couple of them even knew what I was talking about. I've followed the sport since I was 11 years old, and I can't honestly tell you with 100 percent accuracy where the Cane Pace will be held this year, or when exactly the Messenger will be scheduled.

"The Pacing Triple Crown is obsolete and has been for decades," said Perretti Farms' Bob Marks. "No one can decide what to do, if anything, and they've talked about it."

In the 21st century in racing, I believe we don't really need board meetings and votes to decide what races should be in or out of a Triple Crown, we should simply let the market decide.

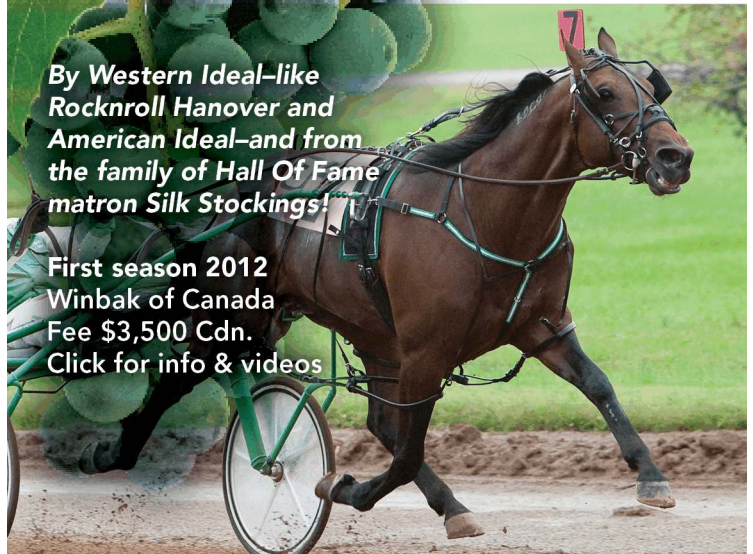
The market says the \$1.5 million Pepsi North America Cup should be the first leg of the Triple Crown. Not only has the race been endorsed by horsemen and horse owners as the first big tilt for sophomores, it has been endorsed by fans. Over \$3 million is bet annually on the card, and Woodbine Entertainment Group promotes it well. On-track attendance, since moving the event from cavernous Woodbine Racetrack to cozy Mohawk Race-track, has swelled. Last year, just like the previous few years, I had to dodge fans on the tarmac, ensuring I didn't spill any of my drink, which we all know is rare for our

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harness events. Canada's Score Television Network, which is available in millions of homes, televises it each year, too.

The Preakness Stakes tends to keep the buzz going for the thoroughbred Triple Crown because it is held only two weeks after the Derby. The \$1 million Meadowlands Pace fits that to a "t," and it should be our second leg. Jeff Gural has been trying to grow the Meadowlands and perhaps the public, the media and government will take us more seriously if the Meadowlands Pace is more than a stand-alone event. It has a big purse, it has cache, and it has a good history. In addition, punters love the Meadowlands, and earlier this decade it was not uncommon to see over \$5 million bet on this race card. This is an easy choice for leg two, even if the purse has to come down over the next few years.

My final leg will be the Little Brown Jug. If you ask people outside racing to name a harness race, chances are this race will be mentioned. The event plays well on television with heats and a final, and the huge crowd is a massive bonus for us. This enables us to leverage crowdsourcing and buzz; two items vital for a strong event nowadays. It's on a half-mile track as well, which adds to the flavor. It is a unique event.

There are pluses and minuses in choosing the above three races, but when we group them together, I believe they work.

Marketer and 21st century marketing consultant Seth Godin in All Marketers are Liars researches the reasons we buy a \$200 pair of sneakers that feel similar to a \$50 pair, or pay \$3.50 for a coffee when we can drink the same brand from a coffee pod at work for 40 cents.

Godin wrote, "Successful marketers don't talk about features or even benefits. Instead they tell a story. A story we want to believe."

The three races that make up our new Pacing Triple Crown tell a wonderful story; one that fits the image of harness racing and harness horses like a glove.

"Three races, three size tracks, culminating in a final leg where an iron tough harness horse struts his stuff in front of 40,000 fans in Ohio, having to win two races on the same day to be crowned champion."

Try and top that story.

It's been a long time since racing was a monopoly. In the old days a gym bag giveaway at Greenwood Raceway in downtown Toronto would ensure an overflow crowd. In 2012, it's not that way at all. We need events and a story. A new Pacing Triple Crown might help us usher in a new era, give us something to promote to the masses, and bring more fans to our wonderful sport. It's a story that I think needs to be written.

twitter

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Big Bad John Gets His Million

In his final career start, **Big Bad John** (Western Hanover) went out a winner last night at Pompano Park, cruising to an easy victory as the 1-20 favorite in the \$12,000 Open.

With the win, his second in two tries at Pompano, he increased his career earnings to \$1,000,559. One of the reasons he was brought to Florida to race before going to stud was because owner



Ed Telle wanted his 4-year-old to get over the \$1 million mark. After the race, Telle confirmed that Big Bad John will not race again. He is set to stand in Ohio.

As expected, the race was a walk in the park. Driven by Wally Hennessey, the Little Brown Jug winner went right to the front from post seven and was never challenged at any point during the mile. His final time was 1:52.2.

Noble, Woebkenberg win Ohio Honors

(press release)

COLUMBUS, OH --- Dan Noble, who won more races than any other harness driver in North America in 2011, has been voted the "Winners Circle Award" for his accomplishments in the sulky last season. Noble drove the winners of 773 races to take the title over George Brennan and Tim Tetric.



Dan Noble

Mike Woebkenberg, a starter at Ohio tracks and county fairs, will receive the "Rambling Willie Award" for his contributions to harness racing in the Buckeye State over the past 20 years. The veteran horseman is a tireless promoter of the sport and always willing to give fans a

ride in his starting gate.

The awards were made by members of the Ohio chapter of the U.S. Harness Writers Assn.

Dan Noble is a son of Ohio Hall of Famer Sam "Chip" Noble and the younger Noble has won many admirers and races with his aggressive driving style. He is the first

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2012

EARLY CLOSING PROGRAM

NOMINATIONS CLOSE FEBRUARY 15, 2012

Declarations Close at the Time and Date Posted on the Weekly Condition Sheet

Event 33 – Trot – 3 Yr. Old Fillies
"DEL MILLER MEMORIAL"
 Saturday, July 14, 2012—\$50,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$275,000

Race Date: Saturday, July 14.....	\$	50,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	500	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	1,000	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,500	
Sustaining Payment: May 15.....	\$	2,000	
Declaration Fee:	\$	2,500	

Event 38 – Trot – 3 Yr. Old Open
"STANLEY DANCER MEMORIAL"
 Saturday, July 14, 2012—\$75,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$350,000

Race Date: Saturday, July 14.....	\$	75,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	500	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	1,000	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,500	
Sustaining Payment: May 15.....	\$	2,000	
Declaration Fee:	\$	2,500	

The following events have a 20% reduction in nominating and sustaining fees.

Event 30 – Pace – Mares FFA
"GOLDEN GIRLS"
 Friday, August 17, 2012—\$75,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$225,000

Race Date: Friday, August 17.....	\$	75,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	600	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	800	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,250	
Sustaining Payment: May 15.....	\$	1,600	
Declaration Fee:	\$	2,500	

Event 31 – Pace – FFA
"WILLIAM R. HAUGHTON MEMORIAL"
 Saturday, August 18, 2012—\$250,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$550,000

Elimination Races: Saturday, August 11.....	\$	50,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, August 18.....	\$	250,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	800	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	1,200	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,600	
Sustaining Payment: May 15.....	\$	2,500	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races.....	\$	5,000	

Event 32 – Trot – FFA
"TITAN CUP"
 Saturday, June 30, 2012—\$75,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$235,000

Elimination Races: Saturday, June 23.....	\$	40,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, June 30.....	\$	75,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	600	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	800	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,250	
Sustaining Payment: May 15.....	\$	1,500	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races.....	\$	2,000	

Winner to receive an invitation to the 2012 Nat Ray Trot

Event 34 – Trot – FFA
"ARTHUR J. CUTLER MEMORIAL"
 Saturday, May 12, 2012—\$75,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$220,000

Elimination Races: Friday, May 4.....	\$	40,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, May 12.....	\$	75,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	800	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	1,250	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,500	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races.....	\$	2,000	

Winner to receive an invitation to the 2012 Nat Ray Trot

Event 35 – Pace – FFA
"GRADUATE"
 Saturday, May 12, 2012—\$100,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$200,000

Elimination Races: Saturday, May 5.....	\$	50,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, May 12.....	\$	100,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	800	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	1,250	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,600	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races.....	\$	2,500	

Event 37 – Pace – 3 Yr. Old Fillies
"MISTLETOE SHALE"
 Saturday, July 14, 2012—\$75,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$300,000

Elimination Races: Saturday, July 7.....	\$	25,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, July 14.....	\$	75,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	400	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	800	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,250	
Sustaining Payment: May 15.....	\$	1,600	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races.....	\$	3,000	

Event 39 – Pace – FFA
"US PACING CHAMPIONSHIP"
 Saturday, August 4, 2012—\$100,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$325,000

Race Date: Saturday, August 4.....	\$	100,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	600	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	800	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,250	
Sustaining Payment: May 15.....	\$	1,600	
Declaration Fee:	\$	2,500	

Event 40 – Pace – 2 Yr. Old Fillies
"SWEETHEART"
 Saturday, August 4, 2012—\$50,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$350,000

Elimination Races: Friday, July 27.....	\$	20,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, August 4.....	\$	50,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	250	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	400	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,200	
Sustaining Payment: May 15.....	\$	1,600	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races.....	\$	2,500	

Event 41 – Trot—2 Yr. Old Fillies
"MERRIE ANNABELLE"
 Saturday, August 4, 2012—\$50,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$375,000

Elimination Races: Friday, July 27.....	\$	20,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, August 4.....	\$	50,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	250	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	400	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,200	
Sustaining Payment: May 15.....	\$	1,600	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races.....	\$	2,500	

Event 42 – Trot – 2 Yr. Old Colts & Geldings
"PETER HAUGHTON MEMORIAL"
 Saturday, August 4, 2012—\$50,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$375,000

Elimination Races: Friday, July 27.....	\$	20,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, August 4.....	\$	50,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	250	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	400	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,200	
Sustaining Payment: May 15.....	\$	1,600	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races.....	\$	2,500	

Event 43 – Pace – 2 Yr. Old Open
"WOODROW WILSON"
 Saturday, August 4, 2012—\$50,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$300,000

Elimination Races: Friday, July 27.....	\$	20,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, August 4.....	\$	50,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	250	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	400	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,200	
Sustaining Payment: May 15.....	\$	1,600	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races.....	\$	2,500	

Event 44 – Pace – Mares FFA
"LADY LIBERTY"
 Saturday, August 4, 2012—\$75,000A
 Estimated Total Purse—\$250,000

Elimination Races: Saturday, July 28.....	\$	40,000	G
FINAL: Saturday, August 4.....	\$	75,000	A
Nominating Fee: February 15.....	\$	800	
Sustaining Payment: March 15.....	\$	1,250	
Sustaining Payment: April 15.....	\$	1,600	
Sustaining Payment: May 15.....	\$	2,250	
Declaration Fee: Elimination Races.....	\$	3,000	

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choice of many trainers and owners in races at Ohio tracks. Last year Noble drove in 2,792 races and his 773-484-349 slate gave him an enviable Universal Driver Rating of .415. He's already announced that he plans to defend his driving title vigorously in 2012.

Woebkenberg is a native of Middletown and attended Ohio State University, then followed his father John into harness racing. Mike was a trainer and driver for many years before he was licensed as a starter. He puts thousands of miles on his starting gate each year crossing the Buckeye State to work at fairs and mutuel raceways. He also operates Superior Sulky Co. from Farmersville, Ohio. Mark Winters, Jr. won the Peter Haughton Award for an outstanding young driver. The 20-year-old Sabina resident scored 27 wins in 2011 behind such talented horses as Lima Thunder, Junior Jesse, and Four Card Monte. Grand Circuit trainer-driver Lou Huber, Jr., a native of Cincinnati and a regular at the Ohio fairs and raceways, was elected to the list of Ohio immortals. He developed and campaigned such top stars as Sampson Direct, Claire Sampson, Uncle Sam, Peter Lobell, Mix Hanover, Canny Imp, and many others. He died in 1977.

The 1967 Little Brown Jug winner Best Of All, owned by Samuel Huttenbauer of Cincinnati and trained and driven by Jim Hackett, a native of London, was also honored by the writers. He was the champion 2-year-old of his season and named Pacer of the Year in 1968 before retiring to a stud career at Hanover Shoe Farms.

In a new policy, Ohio harness writers voted to automatically honor horses enshrined in the national Harness Racing Museum Hall of Fame Hall of Fame or Immortals. Those horses with significant Ohio connections are now included as Standardbred honorees in Ohio. They are Adios Butler, Arnie Almahurst, Belle Mahone, Countess Vivian, Cresceus, Demon Hanover, Eternal Camnation, Iosola's Worthy, Little Brown Jug, Meadow Skipper, Merrie Annabelle, and Speedy Crown.

The name of the newest member of the Ohio Harness Racing Hall of Fame will be released soon.

to properly address any and all issues within the sport and ensure its future. That is creating a central governing body just like every other professional sport: The NFL, NBA, NHL, MLB, etc. Right now the best analogy I can think of is that harness racing is like the wild west with every state and track doing as they please.

As for the drug problem, I applaud the hard line Mr Gural is taking with alleged offenders, but what good does it really do for all of harness racing when the trainer can easily go to other tracks who await them with open arms or simply put down a different name as the trainer?

It makes it very difficult for horseman to operate a business when there's no consistency. And it's not like everyone gets officially notified from each state or track when changes are made. At one point last year local tracks were playing wheel of fortune with draw dates during a span of only a couple of weeks.

I'd prefer not to have any part of this letter personal but I must do so to help make my point. This past year I was clearly wronged by a racing official not allowing my horse to race at his track. He arbitrarily used a rule from a different track from another state at his track, where my horse was entered, doesn't have or use. I was speechless. And what recourse did I have? None. There was no possible reason for this injustice. Yet the official was not held accountable and I was basically told "too bad." That's outrageous. If there were a governing body I'd be able to bring the issue to them. They'd investigate the situation and act accordingly. I'm sure there are plenty of horseman who can give similar stories.

I believe harness racing is a viable product. It needs to become proactive instead of reactive looking only for band-aids. I don't know the contracts and legalities of the current slot revenue but I'd have to believe it's not perpetual. Then what? Another band-aid will be tough to find.

As a business person, aside from the quality of your product what would likely be the next most important thing? Wouldn't it be marketing to let people know what you have. I'm born, raised, and still live in the Meadowlands area and there isn't a single advertisement on the major highways (or any road) surrounding the complex. You wouldn't even know a track exists. Many local people of my generation who would sometimes go to the races think there isn't racing anymore. And many of the younger generation I talk with and explain a bit about the sport say they would gladly give it a try but don't know anything about it and are intimidated by the lack of knowledge.

I was one of the over 40,000 people in attendance on opening night in 1976 of which many were excited about seeing live harness racing for the first time and the track flourished for many years. Of course the advent of Atlantic City and the state lottery took a big toll but nothing was done through the years to try and keep the fan base and also build on it.

Again, I believe a central governing body is a must. I realize creating it would not be easy because, for one reason, no one likes to give up home rule. But if everyone wants to keep their precious dictatorships nothing sub-

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Everyone is talking about the problems in harness racing, most notably the drug issue. Obviously, the illegal use of performance enhancing drugs is a major concern but I haven't seen anyone mention what I believe is the only way

stantial will be accomplished. More owners will become disgusted and get out, current fans will continue to turn away, and new ones will not be created.

Who should instigate creating such an association? In my opinion it makes sense to be the breeders since it's their livelihood and have the most to lose along with trainers and drivers. The Owners? I doubt it. I'm sure some will get involved but to most it's a hobby and if harness racing goes away they'll find another hobby just like its fans.

Tucci

I have stated in the past about the quality & betability of Yonkers racing, where you have slot infused purses with inferior trainers and drivers. In addition, one driver and three trainers basically control the racing. For a serious better the only way you can possibly bet that track is when they changed to 1 1/16 where the outside might have a shot. Now back to a mile and they are right into first turn. I will be very curious to see the handle after this change.

Obviously it reinforces my opinion that the management leaves a little to be desired. Then again, they got the slots so that's all that counts.

John Christiansen

I'm a subscriber to Harness Racing Update and always enjoy reading each and every edition. It's a very well-written publication. I must say, though, that I am surprised to never see a mention of my favorite TV show on harness racing, PA Harness Week. For me, it's must see TV! It is a totally entertaining half-hour show that gives you all of the week's big races - locally and from around the country. But, unlike most racing shows that can be about as much fun as watching a paint dry, PA Harness Week is different. They've got interesting features and show great races from the past! And the back and forth between the shows hosts, Steve and Heather, is really good! The show's great! I'd really love seeing a story about them in HRU. If harness racing is going to grow, then having a great weekly show like this one can only help.

Keep up the good work and Happy New Year!
Brian Wolf

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Wally Hennessey



HRU: No disrespect to Pompano, but a driver of your stature should be driving at the Meadowlands, Yonkers or Woodbine? Why have you become a regular in Florida?

WH: This is what I chose to do. I don't think I was done when I made this decision. I had a young daughter and I was at a different track every night. I could continue doing what I was doing or come down here to drive.

I'm driving, buying and sell-

ing horses and things are working out just as well for me

HRU: But do you miss driving in the big races?

WH: Any driver, trainer or groom will tell you that when you're getting ready for those races there are a lot of butterflies. You get more keyed up. On a nightly basis here, I don't get that keyed up. I don't know if I could handle all that tension anymore. Again, I stopped doing it on my own terms and I don't miss it. I am making a decent living and am happy. I feel very fortunate.

HRU: You and your brother Dan were given horses to train and drive by Stanley Dancer toward the end of his career. What was that like?

WH: It was one of the great endorsements Dan and Wally Hennessey ever received. Stanley Dancer asked us to train for him with some of the last horses he had. He said, 'I hate to ask you this, but could you take some horses for me?' 'Are you kidding me?' I said. I was in awe. It was the greatest endorsement we ever got.

HRU: Moni Maker was such a big part of your career. Take us down memory lane for a bit.

WH: What a job Bill Andrews did with her and he never gets mentioned. He had her as a 2-year-old and 3-year-old and was with her every day. He managed her so well and for that he deserves a lot of credit. He could have mismanaged her and thrown her to the wolves and he never did that. In a way, I was ruined after driving her. After you drive her, how can you compare any other horses to her? When you're asked about any other horse you drive and how good they are they're always going to come in second. There will never be any topping Moni Maker.

Meadowlands Report

Handle Up On 2nd Night

After a strong opening, the wagering momentum continued to build Saturday night at the Meadowlands Racetrack.

The live handle was \$442,822, up 40 percent over the \$316,205 wagered the previous year. The \$2,725,660 total handle represented a 6.5 percent increase over the \$2,558,273 wagered in 2011. Opening night, January 6, also produced strong numbers, notably a 55 percent increase in on-track wagering (\$380,499 vs. \$245,139).

Tim Tetrick was the driving star on the night, guiding five horses to the winner's circle. He swept both halves of the early daily double and won the 10th with 25-1 shot **Outa My Head** (Bettor's Delight).

Saturday's Results:

3, M, \$19,000, Pace, N/W \$16,000 in Last 5 Starts AE: N/W \$75,000 Lifetime, 27.0, 56.0, 1:24.2, 1:52.1, FT

Electrofire (h, 5, Electric Stena--Temples May Day, by Smartest Remark), \$3,300 2008 NSPE O-Stephen B Schneider & William W Siegel. B-Arnold W J Fitzgerald, CA. T-Jean Drolet. D-Yannick Gingras, \$9,500, Lifetime Record: 50-14-8-7, \$107,737

To view replay click [here](#)

6, M, \$30,000, Pace, Invitational, 26.3, 54.2, 1:22.3, 1:50.0, FT



1-Golden Receiver (g, 7, Village Jove--Royal Gold, by Towner's Big Guy) O-Stable 45 & Richard H Taylor & Stephen G Springer & Nina Simmonds. B-Nina Simmonds. T-Mark Harder. D-Brian Sears, \$15,000, Lifetime Record: 97-37-13-21,

\$668,733

2-Annieswesterncard (g, 6, Western Hanover--Annie Your A Card, by Cam's Card Shark) O-Burke Racing Stable LLC & Weaver Brusceci LLC & M1 Stable LLC & The Panhellenic Stb Corp. B-James W Jesk & Ledford Racing Inc & Clucas Trading Co. T-Ron Burke. D-Yannick Gingras, \$7,500

3-Foreign Officer (g, 5, Western Ideal--Allamerican Coco, by Artsplace), \$200,000 2008 LEX-SEL O-David Rovine Stable LLC & J L Benson Stables Inc & Melvin Hartman, CA & Foreign Officer Partners. B-Brittany Farms. T-Tony Alagna. D-Tim Tetrick, \$3,600

Calls: 1, 1Q, 1, 1, NK

Finish Order: Vintage Master, Vlos, Blatantly Good, Drop Red, Western Shore, Money Twitch A

To view replay click [here](#)

8, M, \$25,000, Pace, Preferred, 27.0, 55.3, 1:24.0, 1:51.4, FT

1-Andy Roo (g, 7, The Panderosa--Shelly's Smile, by Cambest), \$30,000 2006 SHS-HBG O-Baron Racing Stable. B-Frederick W Hertrich III & Lewis Arno. T-Pj Fraley. D-Tim Tetrick, \$12,500, Lifetime Record: 118-28-23-16, \$578,668

2-Corky Baran (g, 9, Rambaran--Coinkydink, by Covert Action) O-Stephen B Schneider & William W Siegel. B-Odille J Deleersnyder, CA. T-Jean Drolet. D-Yannick Gingras, \$6,250

3-Sand Summerfield (g, 5, Mantacular--Ribbons And Bows, by Jenna's Beach Boy), \$37,000 2008 OH-SEL O-Robert D Main. B-Pacey A Mindlin & Glen S Gross & Kenneth I Cohen. T-Jason Robinson. D-Matt Kakaley, \$3,000

Calls: 1Q, 1H, 1Q, 2, NK

Finish Order: Nob Hill High, Scotty Mach N, Livefreeordiehard, Go Go Solano, Artist's View, Lizard King, Doubletrouble

To view replay click [here](#)

Andy Roo (Tim Tetrick, \$6.80) held on by a neck to win the Preferred Pace Saturday night at The Big M. After clearing the top past a 27.0 opening quarter, Tetrick rated a 57.0 middle half under no real threat and had enough through the lane to get the job done while all out. Corky Baran (Brian Sears) who was overlaid the whole way charged down the stretch off third over cover only to run out of real estate. Sand Summerfield (Matt Kakaley) who got the early jump on the field sat covered up in the three hole and rallied up for third money through the stretch when clear.

Pompano Report

Saturday's Results:

9, PPK, \$12,000, Pace, OPEN HANDICAP Post Positions Assigned by Earnings in Last 5 Starts, 27.0, 56.3, 1:24.2, 1:52.2, FT

Big Bad John (h, 4, Western Hanover--Trulyawork Of Art, by Artsplace), \$130,000 2009 LEX-SEL O-Winchester Baye Acres Inc. B-Kentuckiana Farms Gen Par. T-Dan Hennessey. D-Wally Hennessey, \$6,000, Lifetime Record: 27-19-2-2, \$1,000,559

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Woodbine Report

Saturday's Results:

2, Wdb, PACE, \$30,000. WILLOWDALE - 1ST LEG - 4 YEAR OLDS, 26.4, 55, 1:23.3, 1:52.3, FT

Odysseus Bluechip (b,g,4 - Cams Card Shark-Chutney Hanover-No Nukes) O-Richard Berthiaume B-Blue Chip Bloodstock Inc,NY T-Benoit Baillargeon D-Mario Baillargeon

Lifetime Record: 34-8-3-3, \$186,021

To view replay click [here](#)

4, Wdb, PACE, \$25,000. NW \$22,500 LAST 5 STARTS OR NW \$35,500 LAST 10 STARTS, 27.2, 56.1, 1:24.4, 1:53.4, FT

Brave Alex Semalu (b,g,5 - Yankee Cam-Signature Semalu-Beach Towel) O-Theresa G Silva, Martin Scharf, Bramdeo Singh, John C Polvinale B-Semalu Inc,Laval,QC T-Ryan Maxwell D-Randall Waples

Lifetime Record: 44-13-7-5, \$193,478

To view replay click [here](#)

8, Wdb, TROT, \$27,000. NW 5 RACES OR \$102,500 (FM \$120,000) LIFETIME. AE: 4 YEAR OLDS, CLAIMING \$75,000, 28, 57.4, 1:26.4, 1:55.3, FT

Order By Roosevelt (b,g,7 - Muscles Yankee-Covent Garden-Mr Lavec) O-Blake J Anthony, Perry C Robins, Carman C Hie B-Armstrong Bros,Brampton,ON T-Carman Hie D-Paul Macdonell

Lifetime Record: 37-10-7-3, \$101,703

To view replay click [here](#)

9, Wdb, PACE, \$30,000. WILLOWDALE - 1ST LEG - 4 YEAR OLDS, 28.2, 58.2, 1:25.4, 1:54, FT

Mystician (b,h,4 - Camluck-Mystic Mistress-Dexter Nukes) O/B-Jeffrey R Gillis, Ken A Henwood, Mac T Nichol,ON-Gerald T Stay,NY T-Jeffrey Gillis D-Jody Jamieson. Lifetime Record: 33-9-13-3, \$1,528,942

To view replay click [here](#)

11, Wdb, PACE, \$38,000. PREFERRED, 26.4, 55.3, 1:23, 1:51.3, FT

Peenie (blk,g,7 - Real Artist-Tre Cress-Towners Big Guy) O-Colin Johnson,Ecurie Jgv Enrg B-Virgil Morgan Jr Stables,OH T-Colin Johnson D-Randall Waples

Lifetime Record: 135-37-31-18, \$491,988

To view replay click [here](#)

Odysseus Bluechip & Mystician Click In Willowdale

By Greg Gangle

TORONTO, Jan 7 - Fourteen four-year-old pacers travelled to Woodbine Racetrack Saturday evening to compete in the first leg of the Willowdale Pacing Series.

The series is for four-year-old pacers in 2012.

In the first \$30,000 division, the Baillargeon brothers, Ben

and Mario, pulled off the 6-1 minor upset with Odysseus Blue Chip in 1:52.3.

The son of Cams Card Shark was in no hurry in the early going as Reckless Ric (Randy Waples), Audreys Dream (Jody Jamieson) and Lonesome Attack (Brett Miller) were quickest to fire. Reckless Ric kept Lonesome Attack and Audreys Dream parked on the outside past the quarter in :26.4.

Audreys Dream would clear to the lead with Lonesome Attack in the pocket on the way to the mid-way station, but Waples quickly re-moved Reckless Ric to the lead before the half in :55.

As the four-year-olds marched around the final turn, Lonesome Attack moved first-over with Odysseus Bluechip catching his cover and was only two and three-quarter lengths off the tempo setter past three-quarters in 1:23.3.

Down the stretch, Lonesome Attack overtook command, but couldn't fend off a late challenge from Odysseus Bluechip who scored a one and three-quarter length victory.

"I was loaded at the three-quarter pole," Mario Baillargeon said following the win. "He loves being on a helmet and tracking horses and with a lot of action up front in the race, it couldn't have worked out better for him. It was a good mile out there tonight. The track is deep and it's windy. It's a 1:50 mile for sure on a good night."

Richard Berthiaume owns the seven-time winner who lifted his bankroll to \$186,021. He paid \$14.80 to win.

In the second and final division, Mystician and Jody Jamieson went gate-to-wire in 1:54, paying \$7.50 to win as the second choice.

The son of Camluck took control of the lead at ease, reaching the first quarter marker in :28.2. Im Feelin Good (Keith Oliver) was in the pocket with Mach Of Ballykeel (Sylvain Filion) third.

With no challengers heading towards the half, Jamieson was able to give Mystician a :30-second breather as they reached the mid-way point in :58.2.

Heading around the final turn, Camaes Fellow (Doug McNair) began the first-over attack with post time favourite, Westwardho Hanover (Brett Miller), tracking him. Mystician reached out to a two and a quarter length lead as he went past three-quarters in 1:25.4.

Down the stretch, Westwardho Hanover was given clear racetrack and Im Feelin Good was gaining ground on Mystician, but it was too late as the nine-time winner scored the victory by a neck. Im Feelin Good edged out Westwardho Hanover for second.

"I thought he raced great," Jamieson said following the win. "There's no question he can go with these horses. His best trip is definitely off a helmet, but the way it worked out with the slow half really helped. He competes week in and week out."

Jeff Gillis, WEG's leading trainer in 2011, trains and co-owns Mystician with Ken Henwood, Mac Nichol and Gerald Stay. The bay lifted his career earnings to \$1,528,942.