

Sunday, July 16, 2017

Huntsville hangs on in a stirring Meadowlands Pace

The colt defeated his surging rival Downbytheseaside by a head in 1:47.4 on Saturday at the Meadowlands to give Tim Tetrick his fifth title and trainer Ray Schnittker his second – all in tribute to late co-owner and co-breeder Charles Ianazzo.

by Brett Sturman



Michael Lisa

Huntsville (Tim Tetrick) held off rival Downbytheseaside (Brian Sears) at the wire to win the \$738,550 Crawford Farms Meadowlands Pace in 1:47.4.

Saturday's edition of the \$738,550 Crawford Farms Meadowlands Pace had a different feel to it from the onset.

The Pace went on without two individuals who had featured prominently in the race through the years. Sam McKee, the voice of the Meadowlands Pace, passed away earlier this year in March and the all-time Meadowlands great John Campbell just retired at the end of June. In their absence, Huntsville delivered what will be one of the more memorable races in Meadowlands Pace history.

Huntsville (Somebeachsomewhere–Wild West Show) had to dig deep for all he was worth in fending off a game Downbytheseaside to win the Pace by a diminishing head in a clocking of 1:47.4 with driver Tim Tetrick earning his fifth Meadowlands Pace title. Trained by Ray Schnittker, who shares ownership with Ted Gewertz and Steven Arnold, the connections of Huntsville were elated, but the win presented

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**Meadowlands
Summer Mixed Sale**

SUNDAY AT 12:00 NOON

122 horses — including many last-out winners!
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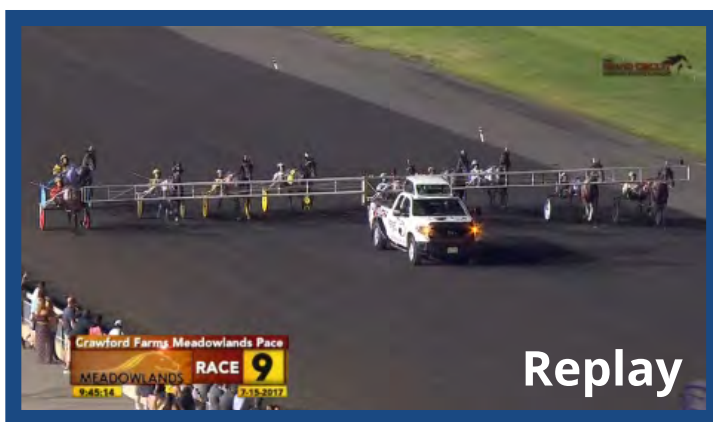
a poignant moment, as well.

Earlier this month, Huntsville's co-owner, and Gewertz's longtime friend, Charles Ianazzo passed away. Gewertz was emotional in the winner's circle. "The first thing I was feeling that brought me to tears was when they had Charlie's picture up on the Meadowlands board prior to the race and spoke about him for a little bit. He was a really dear friend and was one of the four original owners with us on Deweycheatumnhowe."

Along with Ray Schnittker, Ianazzo was also the breeder of Huntsville.

"When Huntsville was getting good as a 2-year-old before he first raced, Charlie sold me a piece and was very happy for that," Gewertz said. "I had known him for 10 years and we had got very close, so this win means everything to me. Over the years, I was winning a lot of the big trotting races and hadn't won this race until now. This means an awful lot."

Despite the stature of Huntsville, Gewertz didn't think a win in the Pace was going to come easy. "I was concerned



about Downbytheseaside. He's a very good horse, very versatile and good gaited. I knew Huntsville would need to be on or near his best to win. I didn't think he was at his best in Canada and that was a big disappointment up there because (the North America Cup is) a nice trophy," Gewertz said with a grin.

The race began with a scramble for the early lead as the big longshot Classic Pro blasted from post 9 with Trevor Henry. After letting the dust settle through a :26:4 opening quarter, Tetrack moved the prohibitive favorite Huntsville to the top ahead of Blood Line who briefly led in between calls after re-taking from the pocket.

Huntsville was motoring through fast middle fractions of :53:3 and 1:20:3 while his nemesis Downbytheseaside came



Dave Landry

Huntsville and his trainer Ray Schnittker, who celebrated his second Meadowlands Pace triumph.

Hip 89 **JJ Flynn**
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UPDATES

Our Summer Mixed Sale racehorses have posted **26 wins since the catalog!** [Click](#) to download the updated racelines booklet – including supplements.



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9, M, \$738,550, P, CRAWFORD FARMS MEADOWLANDS PACE - FINAL 3 Year Old Open, 26.4, 53.3, 1:20.3, 1:47.4, FT

1-Huntsville (c, 3, Somebeachsomewhere--Wild West Show, by Western Hanover) O-Raymond W Schnittker & Theodore Gewertz & Steven Arnold. B-Raymond W Schnittker & Charles V Iannazzo. T-Ray Schnittker. D-Tim Tetrick, \$350,812, Lifetime Record: 18-12-6-0, \$1,304,155

2-Downbytheseaside (c, 3, Somebeachsomewhere--Sprig Hanover, by Allamerican Native), \$65,000 2015 LEX-SEL O-Country Club Acres Inc & Joe Sbrocco & Richard M Lombardo & Diamond Creek Racing. B-Blue Chip Farms LLC & Janet A Seltzer & Jeffrey Scott Rabinowitz & Jordan J Farkas. T-Brian Brown. D-Brian Sears, \$175,406

3-Classic Pro (c, 3, Shadow Play--Kattimon, by Astreos), \$45,000 2015 LEX-SEL O-Dr Ian Moore, CA & R G McGroup LTD, CA & Serge A Savard, CA. B-Winbak Farm. T-Dr. Ian Moore. D-Trevor Henry, \$84,195

Calls: 3T, 1Q, 1Q, 1Q, HD - Finish Order: Filibuster Hanover, Mac's Jackpot, Miso Fast, Blood Line, Boogie Shuffle, Talent Soup, Santafe's Coach

[To watch the race replay click here](#)



Claus Andersen

Tim Tetrick won his fifth Meadowlands Pace title in 11 years.

"The last one, I thought he had a shot, but here I thought we had a real good shot if things went our way," Schnittker said. Echoing Gewertz's comments, Schnittker added "It's great because my one partner Charlie owned the horse and bred him with me and he was a very good guy, a gentlemen. I'm very happy. This feels great."

As long as Huntsville comes out of his Meadowlands Pace victory in good order, he'll be right back at it next week at The Meadows in eliminations for the Adios. Awaiting him there will be the top ranked horse in North America, Fear The Dragon, stablemate to Downbytheseaside in trainer Brian Brown's barn.

Both Tetrick and Schittker said they forward to a rematch. "There's three very nice horses right there (Huntsville, Fear The Dragon and Downbytheseaside)," said Schnittker. "It's going to be a battle through and through and I don't know which ones are better, but I got the cash tonight."

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HUNTSVILLE




2017 MEADOWLANDS PACE WINNER



AUGUST 5 • HARNESS RACING'S GREATEST DAY!

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Michael Lisa

Marion Marauder (Scott Zeron) winning the \$458,750 Hambletonian Maturity over 1 1/8 miles in 2:05.2.

Undercard Wrapup

Saturday's Meadowlands Pace undercard was chock full of talented stakes winners, including Marion Marauder, Walner, Ariana G, Hannelore Hanover, Agent Q and more.

by Jerry Connors

A complete recap of the plethora of stakes on Saturday's Meadowlands Pace undercard.

HAMBLETONIAN MATURITY

(\$458,750, including \$50,000 supplement by Warrawee Roo; 1 1/8 miles)

In 2016, Trotter of the Year Marion Marauder won the Triple Crown by about three feet – a head and two noses. He's not a horse to go to the lead before he has to, and he doesn't win in spectacular fashion.

But nobody is more determined to get past every horse in front of him, and nobody digs in harder late, than Marion Marauder, the son of Muscle Hill–Spellbound Hanover who won by an uncharacteristically large margin – a half-length – in the Hambletonian Maturity, covering 1 1/8 miles in 2:05.2.

The mare Celebrity Eventsy was away swiftly, then yielded to Warrawee Roo, whose connections went game and supplemented him for \$50,000 after finishing a hard-charging second in the Graduate Final. The fractions were :27.1, :56, 1:24.1, and 1:51.3 as Warrawee Roo and driver Dan Dube appeared to be doing everything right – still having the lead in midstretch.

But then, without much asking from driver Scott Zeron, Marion Marauder, who had been first-over before the far turn, reached down to the spot where champions find more and produced it, shifting to a higher gear and dashing the pacesetter's hopes. The late-flying Cufflink Hanover, a 1:51.1 winner two starts back, was flying late to win a l-o-n-g photo over Warrawee Roo, whose connections (the Determination group that won with Emoticon Hanover) made money on the race – third was worth \$55,050 against their \$50,000 supplement fee. Marion Marauder, of course, made a bit more money – in fact, trainer Paula Wellwood and owners Jean Wellwood and Devin Keeling saw the Marauder become the richest Triple Crown winner ever, trot or pace, bumping his bankroll to \$2,139,235.

After the race, Zeron acted just like a kid in a candy shop. "You can grind with him, because you know he won't get weak on you at the end. He likes to race at a target in front of him. And if anything, he's got more drive this year at four than last year."

WILLIAM HAUGHTON MEMORIAL

(\$427,400; 1 1/8 miles)

Mach It So, out to brush for the lead early on the first turn in the 1 1/8-mile William Haughton, took the lead down the backstretch, then held off a long first-over bid from Boston Red Rocks to win in 2:00.4 for the elongated distance.

But here's a good question – was that time a record?

When there was a yearly fact book published, the record for



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1 1/8 miles was listed for only one performer at the distance. Now, without that book available, the kind folks at USTA make a customized computer run to answer the question, and that search produced an interesting result – 2:00.4 was faster than Always B Miki's 2:01.1 win at the long distance last year, but a tick short of the 2:00.3 time posted at 1 1/8 miles by the mare Lady Shadow. The official record-keeper differentiates by sex with "odd-distance" now, not the traditional way. You decide on the record question.

Whichever way you vote, you have to commend the son of Mach Three—Beach Dancer, following up on his Haughton success in 2015. Driver David Miller noted that "it looked like about 10 of them (in the 12-horse field) were leaving," but as it turned Miller was placed fourth after an eighth, with Boston Red Rocks moving up from behind, forcing Miller to move to the top "or forever hold his p(e)ace." He moved; the quarter was passed in :25.4, and Mach Three was soon on top.

Boston Red Rocks didn't try to follow his brush to the top, but remained in the tough grinding first-over spot as Mach It So went on to fractions of :54.1, 1:20.4, and 1:47.1. Boston Red Rocks never relented his advancement for Brett Miller, with the rest of the field unable to stay with the top pair, and in fact "Boston Red Rocks got a nose up on me at one point," David Miller said. It was a great stretch battle between the two Buckeye Millers, and it was David who was able to reach the wire first by a neck, repeating his 2015 margin for trainer Jeff Bamond Jr. and Bamond Racing LLC. The winner paid \$34.60 (which surprised few people watching Pennsylvania racing, as both Buckeyes have been on a hot longshot jag recently).

STANLEY DANCER

(Walner's division \$159,000; Long Tom's \$161,500)

What's really scary is that Walner only figures to get better. Better than going 1:50.2, a stake record and only 1/5th of a second off the world record shared by Donato Hanover and Muscle Hill. In just his second start of the year.

Walner and Tim Tetrick left outside of Sortie and Devious Man, briefly tucking third as the former put the latter in behind him, then was underway frontward before the :28 quarter. The half of :55.1 and ¾ of 1:23.1 were terrific but not special – what was special was watching Walner, who had Devious Man on his back after Sortie made a far turn break, find his major foe still with him in early stretch, and then seeing Tetrick just look back once or twice, coax another gear effortlessly from his charge, and then draw off without visible effort, winning by 3 1/4 lengths, bringing his career



record to eight-for-nine and his bankroll to \$563,537 – a number which looks awfully likely to grow almost exponentially for owner Ken Jacobs.

When asked about her Chapter Seven—Random Design sophomore superstar, trainer Linda Toscano could just say, "He's an amazing animal. He likes to do his work – he thinks it's fun." Linda also said, "I like to fly under the radar as much as I can" – but Toscano/Tetrick/Jacobs are less than 1-9 to see that not happening – everybody wants to know about a horse who could become one of the greats of the sport in the next couple months.

Tetrick completed a sweep of the Stanley Dancer by guiding the Muscle Hill—Illia colt Long Tom to a win in 1:52.4. Long Tom drafted behind pacesetter What The Hill, who took the field through fractions of :28.1, :57, and 1:25.2. The price of trotting went up in the last quarter – and you know your night is going well (Tetrick had five wins on the night) when you catch the pacesetter up the inside – on a track with no passing lane! What The Hill drifted out a little, and Long Tom shot up the inside to gain a 1 ¼-length advantage under the floodlights.

"I am very happy with this horse – he grew over the winter, and we have made a few minor changes that are working for



Michael Lisa

Walner (Tim Tetrick) was scary good in winning his \$159,000 division of the Stanley Dancer.

him,” trainer Marcus Melander said after the race. Asked about his Hambletonian prospects, Melander expects to have two entrants – “Enterprise was not eligible for this race.” Long Tom, owned by AMG Stable Oy, is probably somewhere close to Devious Man in being ranked second in this class – but that’s a big shadow ahead of them.

DELVIN MILLER

(\$125,250 each of two divisions)

The first horse to post parade on Meadowlands Pace night was the #1 trotting filly, Ariana G, and she and the #1 on the red saddle pad were indeed the number one horse on the night to go under the wire, with the daughter of Muscle Hill—Cantab It All a safe 1½-length winner in 1:51.4.

Magic Presto grabbed the early lead and took the field to the quarter in a pedestrian :28.2, at which point driver Yannick Gingras got Ariana G going to reach the lead by the half in :55.4. The top filly maintained control to the 1:24.2 ¾ pole, although Dream Baby Dream was making a big uncovered move to reach contention, and Magic Presto was alive in the pocket. Throughout the stretch, Ariana G seemed to be within herself, with Gingras looking over and slightly back in the battle for place, with Magic Presto squeezing through to photo Dream Baby Dream for the second spot.

Marvin Katz, co-breeder and co-owner of the lifetime winner of \$939,092 with Al Libfeld, said, “I talked with Yannick in the winner’s circle, and he noted he didn’t even have to pull the plugs.” When prodded by interviewer Hollywood Heyden about the possibility of Ariana G taking on the colts in the Hambletonian, Katz laughed and said, “You have to tempt me, don’t you? We’ll talk it over, but I will say this – I think she does have the ability to go right with the top colts.”

In the second division, Feed Your Head left strongly for the lead, put up splits of :27, :56, and 1:24, and approaching midstretch looked to be anything but a 14-1 (white) rabbit, still in command. She held well, but the Yankee Glide—Bank Of Newport filly Overdraft Volo, having assured herself of a pocket trip by early hustling from Andy Miller, found clearance just past the 7/8ths and had enough rally to forge to the lead late, winning by ¾ of a length in a personal best of 1:52.4 as a 7-1 proposition. There were two horses sent off at even money, but neither was a major factor. That’s All Moni was third-over and closed well but had too far to come, while Glitzey Gal made a late break while far back.

Overdraft Volo, a Julie Miller-trained filly, is now a winner of \$269,990 for the Pinske Stables and Kentuckiana Racing Stable. She shouldn’t be ruled out of being a winner on


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CONGRATULATIONS TO
THE CONNECTIONS OF
***Emoticon
Hanover***
(KADABRA—EMMYLOU WHO)

WINNER OF THE MISS VERSATILITY
FFA MARE TROT LAST NIGHT
AT THE MEADOWLANDS IN A
LIFE BEST, TRACK RECORD AND
WORLD RECORD EQUALING
PERFORMANCE OF 4, 1:51 FOR
4YO TROTting MARES.

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Hambletonian Day, said Andy Miller: "I know Ariana G is a tough horse to beat, but this filly is really good, too." She's won three of her last four, and can race on or off the pace – and obviously knows how to play the "pocket rocket" game.

MISS VERSATILITY

(\$30,000 each of two divisions)

The first division of the Miss Versatility was a carbon copy of the first division of Ariana G's Miller section as Yannick Gingras quarter-moved with a superior distaff – in this case Hannelore Hanover, who saw Side Bet Hanover take the field to the quarter in :27.3, then made her move along the back straightaway to reach the front by the :55 midmarker. The daughter of Swan For All—High Sobriety went on to the 3/4s in 1:23.1, then grabbed onto the bit and shifted into overdrive, with Gingras the proverbial passenger as Hannelore stormed home in :27.2 to finish out in 1:50.3, breaking the M(1) older trotting mare record of Buck I St Pat – who also was trained by Hannelore's conditioner, Ron Burke – and missed Giant Diablo's divisional world record by only two ticks.



Michael Lisa

Hannelore Hanover (Yannick Gingras) set a new track record for older trotting mares of 1:50.3 while winning her \$30,000 division of the Miss Versatility.

Caprice Hill came from second-over to be five lengths back in second, but no threat to the career winner of \$1,585,823, who took a new mark for Burke Racing Stable LLC, Weaver Brussemi LLC, Frank Baldachino, and J&T Silva Stables LLC. The Meadowlands ruled out show wagering on this contest, but they were through quick calculation (the second choice was 15-1) on the borderline of a win minus pool, and drew almost three times the almost-\$30,000 win pool in the place slot.

Speaking of his \$2.40 Daily Double winners, Gingras was quick to praise "these two special horses." Asked about competing against males with Hannelore, Yannick said that "when the big money races come up, the boys will definitely be on our radar."

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CONGRATULATIONS TO
THE CONNECTIONS OF
Agent Q
(WESTERN TERROR—TEENAGE PAIGE)

WINNER OF THE \$165,700
MISTLETOE SHALEE LAST NIGHT
AT THE MEADOWLANDS IN A LIFE
BEST OF P,3,1:48.4. THIS MILE
ALSO EQUALED THE STAKES AND
TRACK RECORD. **AGENT Q** WAS
DRIVEN TO VICTORY BY DAVID
MILLER FOR TRAINER CHRIS RYDER
AND OWNERS MARTIN SCHARF,
ROCHETTI CASSAR RACING AND
ROBERT MUSCARA.

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Hannelore Hanover's name popped up after the Miss Versatility's second division, as the Kadabra—Emmylou Who filly Emoticon Hanover equaled Hannelore's 1:51 world record for 4-year-old trotting mares, and broke a three-way tie for the divisional track record. Dan Dube took the shortest way home with this winner of \$718,998, putting her right on the engine and notching splits of :28.3, :56.3, and 1:24.2, then storming home in :26.3 (in race where each quarter was faster than the previous one) to win in full control. Last year, this filly won seven races and \$490,696, but had been winless in six 2017 starts for trainer Luc Blais and the snappily-named ownership of Determination – she made her announcement back to top form in the most demonstrative way possible.

GOLDEN GIRLS

(\$201,000; 1 1/8 miles)

Trainer Jo Ann Looney-King “knew that Nike Franco N could beat the great Lady's Shadow, and when I saw the trip tonight, I thought it would be our night” in the Golden Girls at the 1 1/8-mile distance.

It was indeed, as Nike Franco N left strongly, pushed the streaking Lady's Shadow to get the lead in :26.1 after starting post 10. The Kiwi daughter of McArdle-Nearea Franco sat in the comfy pocket as the defending “Lady” champion continued on with splits of :54.2 and 1:22, shaking off first-up Pure Country after the latter fraction.

Lady's Shadow continued to lead at the 1:48.1 mile marker, but the margin was shrinking as Nike and driver Tim Tetrick had vacated the pocket and had their sights on the lead. Lady's Shadow was her usual game self, but an equally-game Nike Franco N got the decision tonight, covering the extra distance in 2:01.2 after taking a ¾-length margin on the money.



Michael Lisa

Agent Q (David Miller) breezed to a 1:48.4 victory in the \$167,500 Mistletoe Shalee.

ANOTHER ★ CHAMPION

*Sired by a
Hanover Stallion!*

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THE CONNECTIONS OF

Huntsville

(SOMEBEACHSOMEWHERE—WILD WEST SHOW)

WINNER OF THE \$738,550
CRAWFORD FARMS
MEADOWLANDS PACE ON
SATURDAY AT THE MEADOWLANDS
IN A LIFE BEST OF 1:47.4 FOR
OWNERS RAY SCHNITTKER,
THEODORE GEWERTZ, STEVEN
ARNOLD AND DRIVER TIM
TETRICK. RAY SCHNITTKER IS ALSO
THE BREEDER AND TRAINER OF
HUNTSVILLE.

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HANOVER WILL SELL YEARLINGS AT
GOSHEN, OHIO AND HARRISBURG

A winner of \$577,702, Nike Franco N was imported by owner Richard Poillucci and placed in the care of Looney-King, where she has done well this year, although Lady's Shadow had returned to Victory Lane in three earlier meetings. But tonight, Nike Franco N earned the spoils of the winner's circle celebratory picture.

MISTLETOE SHALEE

(\$167,500)

Agent Q had one of the toughest trips around – early tuck, then first-over – but shrugged off a little thing like a hard journey, grinding to the lead early in the lane, then drawing clear of Idyllic Beach, last year's freshman champion, by two lengths in 1:48.4, a new mark and an equaling of the divisional track record of Dancinwiththestarz.

Brazuca quarter-moved past early leader Big City Betty in a :26.4 split, then went on to the half in :54.3, just about where Agent Q started her uncovered grind. The heavily-favored daughter of Western Terror—Teenage Paine moved up inexorably as the field headed to the 1:21.4 ³/₄ pole, then easily drew clear under light urging from driver David Miller en route to the impressive triumph for trainer Chris Ryder, who just picked up responsibility for the mare. Bill Rochetti of Rochetti Cassar Racing, co-owner with Martin Scharf and Robert Muscara, noted that the future of the mare included some Pennsylvania Sire Stakes racing, and hopefully the Breeders Crown and the Three Diamonds.

The Meadowlands TV crew provided a large note of irony after the race, as the song played as Agent Q came back to the winners circle was "Song Two" by Blur. Until recently, "two" was the loneliest number for Agent Q, as she was second in the 2016 She's A Great Lady (by a half-length) and Breeders Crown (by a nose), and this year's Fan Hanover (by a nose) – had she won those photos, she would have an additional \$312,495 in her card in addition to the \$819,475 she has bankrolled. Out with "Song Two" – in with "We Are The Champions" by Queen.

WAGERING AND ATTENDANCE

Attendance for the card was 10,111. All-source wagering totaled \$3,823,629, which was less than last year's \$4.2 million, but that card included \$747,891 in new money for a huge Jackpot Super Hi-5, which had a big carryover. On-track betting was \$557,018, up almost \$50,000 from 2016.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO
THE CONNECTIONS OF
Long Tom
(MUSCLE HILL—ILIA)

WINNER OF THE \$161,500
STANLEY DANCER MEMORIAL
LAST NIGHT AT THE
MEADOWLANDS IN 3, 1:52.4.

LONG TOM WAS DRIVEN TO
VICTORY BY TIM TETRICK FOR
TRAINER MARCUS MELANDER AND
OWNERS AMG STABLE OY
OF FINLAND.

LONG TOM SOLD AS A YEARLING
FOR \$60,000 AT THE 2015
HARRISBURG SALE.


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Georgia Panagi

Kwik Talkin (Jordan Stratton) set a stakes record of 1:53.4 while winning the \$110,500 final of the Lawrence B. Sheppard Saturday at Yonkers.

Kwik Talkin puts connections in the limelight with Sheppard win

Robert Robinson and Scott and Lisa Henry were emotional after winning the \$110,500 race for rookie pacers at Yonkers.

by Tom Pedulla

Robert Robinson was beside himself with frustration as he attempted to watch Kwik Talkin in a Lawrence B. Sheppard elimination last Saturday night at Yonkers Raceway.

His exasperation had nothing to do with the colt's winning performance, but with a broadcast signal that was lost as the opening half-mile unfolded.

This week, there were no technical difficulties – no issues of any kind – since Robinson watched in person as Kwik Talkin captured the \$110,500 Sheppard final in a stakes record of 1:53.4 on Saturday night at Yonkers.

The Ontario-based Robinson, 50, known for doing an excellent job developing young horses that he then turns over to others for their racing careers, made sure to savor every stride his pace-setting youngster took as the Well Said–Kwik Dial colt won for the fourth time in as many starts. Hail the Taxi, a 35-1 longshot, had held the stakes record with a time of 1:54.1, set in 2012.

"I dreamed about this my whole life," Robinson said. "When I was a kid, I dreamed about these kinds of races."

The outcome meant as much to Scott and Lisa Henry, the husband and wife team from Kingston, ON who appear to have hit it big as first-time owners. Scott and Lisa both became emotional in the winner's circle.

Scott said he thought of his late father, Sonny, and what the sweet moment would have meant to him.

"He had horses. He was an owner and trainer," Scott said. "He gave Robbie some catch drives when he first started driving."

Lisa beamed with pride after winning driver Jordan Stratton presented her with his whip as a keepsake she will

A large promotional poster for the 2016 Hambletonian race. At the top, a red banner with yellow text reads "2016 HAMBLETONIAN". Below the banner, a crowd of spectators is shown gathered around a trophy. The main text in the center reads "DON'T MISS A MINUTE... The Hambletonian AT THE MEADOWLANDS". Below this is a logo for the 92nd Hambletonian at the Meadowlands, featuring a horse and driver. The prize money is listed as "\$1,000,000 HAMBLETONIAN AND \$500,000 HAMBLETONIAN OAKS". The date and time are "SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 2017" with "Gates Open 10:00 a.m. • First Race 12:00 p.m.". It also states "Live on CBS Sports Network 4:00-5:30 p.m. (EDT)". For more information, it directs to "playmeadowlands.com" or "www.hambletonian.com". At the bottom, logos for CBS Sports Network HD, Fette Infiniti, and Hanover are displayed. The bottom section of the poster shows a driver in a blue and white uniform holding a trophy, with a woman in a yellow shirt and sunglasses standing next to him, and a horse in the background.

surely treasure. "It's like watching your son win a football game or win at the Olympics," Lisa said. "(Kwik Talkin) is my star."

Robinson has always operated with a modest budget, leading him to be painstaking when he prepares for the annual Harrisburg sale.

"I study hard, and when I go to the sale, I probably look at over 100 yearlings," he said. "You have to look at a lot because your budget is limited. You have to really do your homework."

The inability to spend big also leads Robinson to overlook flaws that tend to discourage others. He noted that Kwik Talkin toed out a bit in his right front.

"Does that not concern you?" a skeptical friend asked before the auction.

"No," Robinson said. "I watched the video. He paces. He trots."

Robinson knows how challenging sales can be. He was the underbidder when Summer Side, last year's Sheppard winner, was hammered down for \$15,000. He made sure Kwik Talkin did not get away, going to \$18,000 for him at last year's Harrisburg sale.

He recently rejected a substantial offer for the bay colt in deference to the Henrys. They did not want this ride to end, no matter what the profit might have been.

"I wouldn't want someone to sell my horse on me. They are first-time owners," Robinson said. "It looks like a good decision."

Robinson needed the benefit of replay to see Kwik Talkin sit off the pace in taking last weekend's elimination in 1:54.4, the fastest of three eliminations by more than two seconds. This time, his heart was in his mouth as Stratton gunned his horse from the seven hole in a field of eight only to be caught wide around the first turn.

Kwik Talkin persevered to make the early lead for a determined Stratton, who felt he had the best horse and wanted to leave nothing to chance.

"I had the seven hole. He was much the best last week. I was going to go down swinging," Stratton said. "If it didn't work out, it didn't work out."

With well-regarded Springsteen, the eventual runnerup, and driver Jason Bartlett in hot pursuit, the eventual winner blazed the opening quarter in 27.3 seconds, the opening half in a sizzling 56 seconds. Stratton admitted to being very concerned at that point.

"We were a little wide the first turn and a half in :56 was a lot faster than I wanted to go," he said. "But he got a little breather up the backside and he responded." The opening three-quarters went in 1:25.2.

Kwik Talkin surprised Rob Harmon, his trainer, in a couple

of ways.

"At the start, I didn't think the race was going to go that way at all," Harmon said.

Stratton, though, was justified in the end, and the newly-crowned Sheppard champion continues to respond as the competition grows keener. The Pennsylvania Sire Stakes at The Meadows will be next.

"He does surprise me because when I sit behind him, he's on the lazy side. He's just out there having fun," Harmon said. "When a horse comes next to him, he's like a different horse. It's like a switch that turns on."

For Robinson, there is a chance that Kwik Talkin's early success may be career-altering. Perhaps he will have a bit more to spend for quality prospects in the future.

"Maybe this will help me," he said. "Maybe people will recognize the good work I do."

The race honors the late founder of famed Hanover Shoe Farm. Sheppard was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1967, one year before he died.

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Stomach ailment forces favorite Delicious to retire from racing

American-bred Delicious has been one of the most popular trotters in Europe since she arrived in Sweden in 2012. Now her racing career is over.

by Thomas Hedlund

Swedish trainer Daniel Redén has a lot to thank Delicious for after making the difficult decision Thursday to retire her from racing due to a stomach ailment.

The Cantab Hall mare out of Ipsara LB has enchanted the fans in Europe many times and during the summer of 2015 she broke three world records, three times in a row on three different distances on 5/8ths of a mile tracks.

"She is the most valuable horse that I've had contact with in my life. Everything about her is so special and she's a fragile individual that has to be handled with care," Redén has said many times during the last two years.

The eight-year-old mare was scheduled to race in Årjäng, Sweden, last Saturday. But, at the beginning of this week, her stomach problems returned and on Wednesday evening she had to be taken to the veterinary clinic outside Uppsala, not far from her home in Sweden.

"I was at races that night and couldn't see what shape she was in, but her caretaker is observant and told me that it would be for the horse's best if we went to the clinic. Thursday morning I took the car and went to see the horse and it was very hard to look at her lying in the box with all that pain that she had. Her condition was really bad and the worst-case scenario since she came to my stable. I thought it was over, that she was going to die...So, I told her that she will be better when she gets to that other place that we don't know so much about and then I tried to get home, with my eyes full of tears," Redén said.

Ron Gurfein trained Delicious in most of her career in USA and for the magazine Sulkysport the Hall Of Famer said:

"Delicious had, in my opinion, the best caretaker in USA.



Jeannie Karlsson/Sulkysport

Delicious has been one of the most popular horses both in Team Redén's barn in Sweden and with European trotting fans. The Cantab Hall mare was retired from racing this week due to a serious stomach ailment.

Lisa Palmiter doesn't take care of horses, she adopts them and do you know what's strange? I've sold a lot of horses that Lisa took care of and hardly anyone of them have worked out afterwards. Delicious is one of the few horses that have been good and that's why I can understand that she is in a stable where the trainer is nice and good to her," Gurfein said.

Redén, who also named his daughter after his favourite horse, bought Delicious in Harrisburg when the horse was three-years-old. The price was \$100,000.

"Horses are like humans, you walk into a room and get this feeling. Is it a good or a bad human? I directly felt that Delicious was special and I know I was right about that," Redén said.

But every fairytale has an end and the story about Delicious is over, at least concerning her career on the racetracks. Her bowels are damaged and that is something that Redén has had in mind for two years now. To get an understanding what's bothering the quick mare, one can compare her sickness to Crohn's disease, a type of inflammatory bowel disease.

"I just waited for that call on Thursday afternoon and when the veterinary called I was prepared for the worst. But he had some good news. The surgery went well and they found another problem with the bigger bowel in her stomach. The vet could fix that, but now we have to wait and see how she reacts when she's going to eat by herself. So far she hasn't got much food at all and we try to communicate with the veterinarian as often as we can, just to get to a point where we can find a solution for the horse. Right now I'm just so happy that she is still alive. The critical moment is not yet over, but we pray for her. It would be the most fantastic thing

if we can arrange so that she can be a mother some day,” Redén said.

Delicious won in world record time of 1:50.2 in August, 2015. Two weeks later, she won in 1:52.3 in two 5/8ths of a mile and soon thereafter she won in 1:56 in 2.5 5/8ths of a mile.

[Delicious' 1:50.2 world record](#)

[Delicious' 1:52.3 world record](#)

[Delicious' 1:56 world record](#)

The Jerry Riordan show in Scandinavia

Jerry Riordan can look back on last weekend as a sign of great success. Last Saturday, his Ringostarr Treb (Classic Photo) won the gold division in Halmstad, Sweden and on the Sunday the American trainer saw Oslo Grand Prix winner Twister Bi (Varenne) cross the line first in Ulf Thoresen Memorial at Jarlsberg, Norway.

To honor Thoresen, his home track Jarlsberg arrange the Memorial every year in the beginning of July and the race has shifted shapes during the years. For many years, the race was open for the three-year-olds, but now the elite competes at the track in the beautiful village of Tönsberg in Norway.

Thoresen was by many considered the best harness racing driver in the world and for the American spectators he presented himself with two upset winners in the USA in 1986. Habib won the International Trot and Nuclear Kosmos the Hambletonian, both horses with Thoresen in the sulky.

The Norwegian top driver sadly passed away in 1992. Italian bred Twister Bi, who won Oslo Grand Prix in Norway four weeks earlier, showed no mercy when he was alone in the home stretch for Christoffer Eriksson. From post position two, Eriksson made his move when quick starter Oasis Bi came to the lead shortly after the start. Twister Bi was in front after a quarter of a mile and 30-year-old Eriksson proved again that he is the new super driver in Scandinavia. Twister Bi and Eriksson made it difficult for the opponents when they successively sped up the pace in the lead.

With a quarter of a mile to go in the two 5/8ths of a mile race, Twister Bi left the field and disappeared to the victory in 1:53.2 as approximate mile time.

“I was a little surprised after Oslo Grand Prix, but the horse is super good and I had good feelings before the race. Twister Bi is getting better for every start, more mature and it didn't cost too much to get the lead. I like it when the horses run in an even tempo, like this time and when Christoffer pulled the earplugs, the horse exploded,” Riordan said.

Lionel finished second and Oasis Bi third.

The victory was worth \$90,000 and Riordan was satisfied not just with Twister Bi last weekend. Ringostarr Treb came to his stable after Sweden Cup at Solvalla in the end of May and in the first start for Riordan the horse made the impossible possible. In a race over two 5/8ths of a mile, the son of Classic Photo made a break in the lead after 250 meters and was later in the race seen at the last position. After an incredible finish, Ringostarr Treb won in 1:53.2 and the spectators could not believe what they had witnessed.

“Twenty-seven years ago, I saw something that I can compare to this and it was when Embassy Lobell won a race in the beginning of his career. But that was in a low class and Ringostarr Treb did this among many great horses. It's rare to see something like that”, Jerry Riordan said.

[Ringostarr Treb](#)

[Twister Bi](#)

[Nuclear Kosmos winning the 1986 Hambletonian with Ulf Thoresen](#)

[Habib winning the 1986 International Trot with Ulf Thoresen](#)

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Dave Landry

Now retired from driving, Mike Lachance (right) spends much of his time working with his son, Patrick, including picking out yearlings at the sales.

Mike Lachance: Loving life and feeling blessed

The Hall of Fame driver reflects on his stellar career, his epic 30-year battle with John Campbell and says retirement has given him the chance to spend lots of time with family.

by Dave Briggs

Driver Mike Lachance is making up for 40 years of lost time – and loving every second of it.

The U.S. and Canadian Hall of Famer said he's blessed to have had the career he had and the opportunities it has afforded him in retirement – especially when it comes to spending time with his family.

"The good news is that I'm 66 years old and still healthy, so I knock on wood and thank God every day. I can't complain," Lachance said Wednesday. "I'm still doing whatever I like to do. I'm with my kids and my grandkids. Right now, it's a wonderful life for me.

"Now that I'm retired, I go out with my wife and we go out two or three times a week and we never, never miss going

out on Saturday nights – all the things I could never do for 40 years, now I do it. Right now, it's working out great. I'm a pretty lucky guy."

Over a 50-year career, Lachance won 10,421 races and earned \$190 million in purses, currently ranking him fourth all-time on a list led by John Campbell with just over \$300 million.

"When I became a catch driver in my 30s, I got the best of everything. I was spoiled for 20-some years," Lachance said. "I drove the best horses in the country for the best people. I was very, very lucky. I stayed in one piece after all of those years, driving in all those races. I could have been broken down in pieces, but I got lucky."

Lachance may not drive anymore – except for special events – but he's still active in the business. He travels to Toronto from New Jersey every six weeks or so to visit his grandchildren and help his son, Martin, train horses. But, mostly, the elder Lachance works with his son, Patrick.

"Basically, I'm with Patrick almost every day," Mike said. "Patrick is the one-man band or musician. He plays



Dave Briggs

Lachance (at Legends Day at Clinton Raceway in 2015), said he's looking forward to racing against John Campbell one final time at this year's Legends Day on July 30.

everything himself. He trains, owns, drives... he spends a lot of time in the barn. He's got young horses there, but it's working out well for him. He does well.

"He learned some from me and I'm learning some from him. I'm still learning all the time. Things have changed in the last 30 and 40 years, but if you don't change with the times you get lost."

Mike said working with horses every day has been good for his soul.

"Horses are my life," he said. "I don't spend too much time watching sports. Basically, I've said before, I'm a boring guy to be around. I like the horses. I like to get up in the morning and be with the horses."

As for the glory days when he battled Campbell on a nightly basis at the Meadowlands, Mike said he figures he's raced against Campbell more times than anyone in the sport's history. It's fitting Mike will be in Clinton, ON on July 30 to drive in Campbell's final race – the \$15,000 Legends Day Trot on Legends Day.

Campbell and Lachance hail from two of racing's great families – Campbell from Ontario and Mike from Quebec – and, along the way, they had some epic on-track battles, but remained professionals and mutual admirers off the track.

"The last 25 years, (Campbell's) locker was next to me at the Meadowlands, so we dressed next to each other every night for 25 years. If you count everything up, I don't think there anyone who drove more races against John than me. I've been on Grand Circuit with John for 30 years. He's a guy that was very, very disciplined and I admired that from him," Mike said.

"We campaigned great horses against each other – Western Ideal and Dragon Again. Self Possessed and Angus Hall, Bettors Delight and Real Desire. I could name 10 more and we were first and second every night, beating each other. It was frustrating at times, but not something that we carried for a long time."

Sometimes, that mutual competitiveness carried over off the track, but not often, Mike said.

"A couple of times through the years we had some words because we were tough competitors, but I think he always had a lot of respect for me and I did for him," Mike said. "We never went weeks with arguing or something like that. If there was something, we said it after the race and the next day it was over. He was good for that, didn't want to carry grudges for years. Sometimes there were arguments between the guys and they would take it to the track. Me and him? Nah. A couple of times we had different options, but he said his piece and I said my piece and we went on. That's a thing that I like about him."

As for drivers Mike admired growing up, other than family members, he puts Keith Waples at the top of the list.

"I was at Richelieu Park in the middle of the '60s and Ronnie (Waples) was working for Keith (Waples). I was working for (my brother) Gilles (Lachance), at 13 or 14 years old. I've known those people all my life. I have idolized Keith my whole life and I still do.

"We say 'this guy is special or that guy is special or he's one-in-a-million'. For me, I say there will never be one like Keith Waples – ever...Keith is in a class of his own. That guy could do everything – great businessman, great, great driver, great horseman, great trainer and a great guy to get along with... man of his word, just so many things going for him.

"I saw him in his prime. I drove against him and he taught me a lesson without even saying anything to me by the way he was doing things in the race. The first time I was in a photo with him at the wire, I'll remember that for the rest of my life. It's the little things like that. You know, when you idolize somebody you should never get to know him, but with Keith Waples even if you want to know more about him, you're going to like him more. He's a very special person."

Lachance was inducted into the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame in 1993 and the U.S. Hall of Fame in 1996.

The second youngest of eight children born to Gédéon and

Francoise Lachance, Mike's earliest memories are of an unselfish father who shared everything with his children – most of all, his profound love of horses.

"I remember my father coming to the house and picking me up in the wintertime and we were going in the sleigh with the horses and he would stop on the side of the road and he would give me his pocket knife and say, 'Just cut a little branch there.' When we were coming back home with the horses he used to teach me to touch them (with the branch) to make them go faster," Mike said in 2003 for a feature in The Canadian Sportsman magazine. "I was five, six years old and I was getting all the snow in my face. I'll never forget those things. Wherever he went he would always bring me along with him."

A few years later, Gédéon, who first adopted the family's red, white and black colours, encouraged Mike to drive the family's horses on the fair circuit.

"I was 13 years old," Mike said. "Every Sunday he was supposed to drive, but just before the race, when it came time, he'd say, 'You're going to drive. Why don't you try it.'"

Before long, Mike left home to work with the horses for his older brother, Gilles, a Canadian Hall of Famer in his own right.

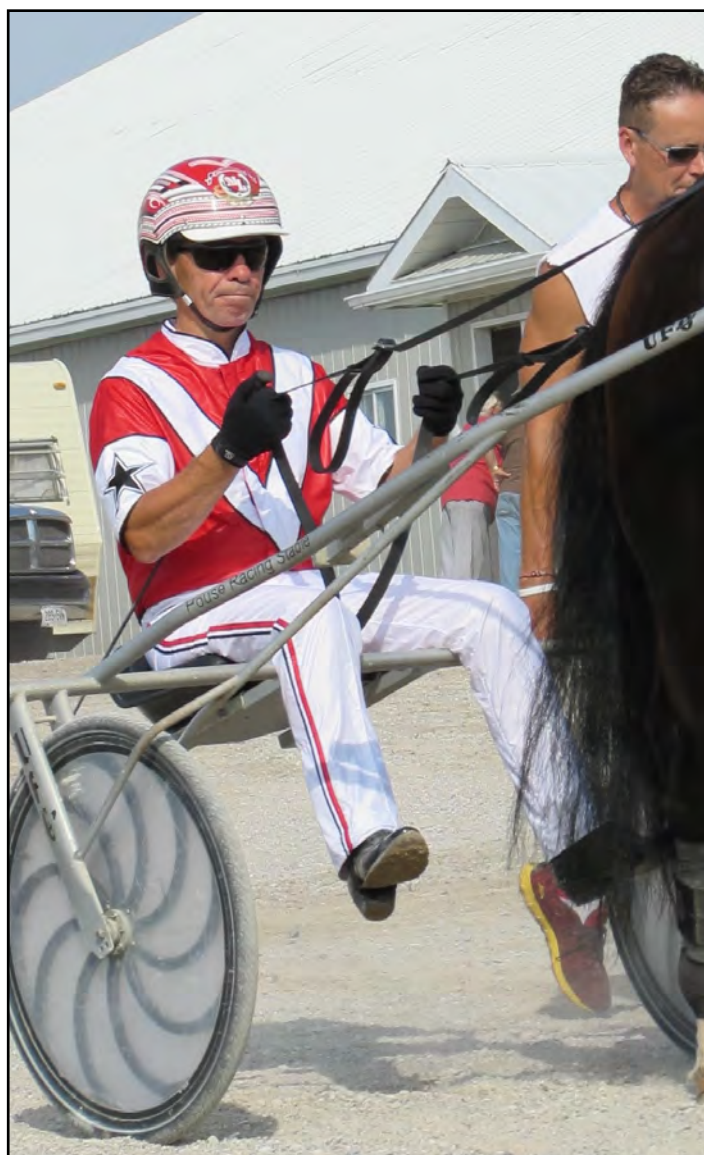
In 1967, when Mike was 17, he made his first pari-mutuel start driving a horse for Gilles in Quebec City. Mike remembers getting parked in that first start when he left hard from an outside post, but soon figured out how to consistently find the winner's circle.

A move to the smaller ovals in New York State followed, and Mike piled up the wins, but he truly made his mark in the sport in the late 1980s after moving to the Meadowlands Racetrack in New Jersey.

From 1996 through 2003, Iron Mike drove the winners of more than \$8 million each year. In that same span, he won the Hambletonian four times (Victory Dream, Continentalvictory, Self Possessed and Amigo Hall).

He has won virtually every major stakes race in the sport, including the Little Brown Jug five times (B J Scoot, Goalie Jeff, Magical Mike, Western Dreamer and Bettors Delight), the North America Cup three times (Safely Kept, Straight Path and Bettors Delight), the Meadowlands Pace twice (Matts Scooter and Allamerican Theory) and the Breeders Crown 27 times.

"The thing that I'm the most proud of is to be around for so long. I started in the late 60s in Quebec City and was always on top of the drivers' list for years after. I was around for a long time, but I was lucky too – no big accidents or other things to keep me off the track and I'm really thankful for that," Mike said.



Dave Briggs

Lachance said he is proud of his long history of success in the sulky and has been blessed to avoid major injuries and remain healthy.

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First Half Driver Trends

Through the first six months of 2017, which drivers are trending up, which are down and which are consistent compared to the same time last year?

by Joe FitzGerald

Trending Up

Jason Bartlett, 36, who was number two going into July of last year, is currently the earnings leader. He was also first on July 1, 2015. While his drives are up by a modest 21 and his wins are off by four, Bartlett had \$1.7 million more this year than last. That is a big number. His UDRS is a very good 0.369. A late start for rival Brian Sears didn't hurt. Bartlett, who is the top driver at Yonkers, was third on the dash list at the halfway point.

Dash king **Aaron Merriman**, 39, is number three on the money list at the six-month juncture, just as he was in 2016. The indefatigable one has driven in 179 more races and chalked up 93 more wins, giving him an insurmountable lead in the dash category. His money is up by more than \$600,000 and his UDRS has risen to a nifty 0.378. During the period in question Aaron was the leading driver at Northfield and number two at The Meadows.

Matt Kakaley, 29, was fourth at the mid-point in the year, just as he was in 2016. His drive and win totals, as well as his UDRS, didn't change much but his earnings increased by \$723,000. Matt was number two at Pocono Downs and number eight at Yonkers.

David Miller, 52, the Driver of the Year in 2015 and 2016, was in seventh, just like he was last year. After taking the winter off, his drives are down by 55 while his wins are up by eight and his earnings are \$468,000 ahead of the end of June, 2016. He won the NA Cup and Hempt with North American money king Fear The Dragon.

George Brennan, 50, is in ninth place, just like last year. He had 49 more drives, 10 fewer wins and more than \$510,000 extra in his bankroll. His UDRS dropped from 0.271 to 0.227. Brennan is third at Yonkers behind Bartlett and Stratton.

Corey Callahan, 39, went from 10th last year to sixth. Things are looking up across the board: He had 55 more wins in 96 more drives; His earnings are better by more than \$700,000; and his UDRS is up to 0.290 from 0.272. The driver of Bill's Man and Mel Mara topped the list at Dover Downs and was second at The Meadowlands, fourth at Harrah's and thirteenth at Pocono Downs. After finishing fourth, sixth and fifth, respectively, on the dash list from 2013 through 2015, Corey dropped to 13 at the end of 2016. He was fifth on the dash list through the end of June.

Jordan Stratton, 30, the number two driver at Yonkers Raceway, is having a career year. He jumped from 13 to number two. Jordan had 87 more wins on 216 more drives, while his earnings were up by almost \$2 million. His UDRS rose from 0.229 to 0.292. Bit Of A Legend N, Springback Sam N and Provocativeprince N are a few of the imports he made that money with.

Dan Dube, 48, who won the \$529,000 Levy with Keystone Velocity, went from 15 to 10. He had 37 fewer wins on 45 fewer drives, but that win helped him exceed last year's total by \$500,000. He was seventh at Yonkers and his UDRS dropped from 0.239 to 0.208, but he increased his bankroll.

Mark MacDonald, 38, has moved up again, from sixteenth to twelfth. The number six driver at Yonkers only had four more wins but his earnings jumped by \$550,000. Mark finished 2016 in the 13 spot.

Chris Page, 33, moved up three spots, from 17 to 13. The leading driver at Scioto and number three at Miami Valley, had 26 fewer wins on 59 fewer drives, but his money was up by \$327,000. And his UDRS rose from 0.264 at the six-month mark in 2016 to 0.335.

Tony Morgan dropped from 18 to 25. He had 53 fewer wins on 194 fewer drives and he was short \$254,000. Morgan was number two at Dover Downs, number four at Harrington and eighth at Harrah's.

Trace Tetrick, 30, who is second on the dash list, went from number 25 to 13 on the earnings list. He logged 86 more wins on 122 more drives and increased his money by \$673,000. Trace's UDRS rose from 0.270 to 0.322. Trace was the leading driver at Miami Valley and is number one at Hoosier Park.

2013 and 2014 dash champ **Ronnie Wrenn Jr**, 30, was fourth on the dash list this year, but on the all-important money list he moved from number 20 to 16. And that was on 88 fewer drives—quality over quantity. He generated only six more wins but showed \$116,270 more in the earnings column. The number two driver at Northfield behind Aaron Merriman saw his UDRS drop from 0.390 to 0.343.

Jimmy Marohn Jr, 35, the top driver at the Meadowlands during the first six months of 2016, made his money double as it increased by almost a million dollars. He won 58 more races on 21 more drives and saw his UDRS move up from 0.286 to 0.317. He was fourth at Pocono and fifth at Tioga. And he was ninth on the dash list.

Brent Holland, 46, the number eight driver at Yonkers, is killing it in 2017. He went from not being on the top 50 list at the break last year to number 18 this. He had 86 wins — 69 per cent as many as in all of 2017—and more than \$2 million in earnings — 79 per cent as much as in all of 2016.

Joe Bongiorno, 23, who finished 2015 off the top 50 list and last year at number 29, continues to raise his profile. He was number 30 at the break last year and 22 this. He drove in 142 fewer races, logging 101 fewer wins, and his UDRS dropped from 0.295 to 0.221, but his money was up by \$300,000. Through six months he was number five at The Meadowlands, number 10 at Yonkers and 13 at Harrah's.

In his first year on the WEG circuit, **Louis P Roy** is number one in the standings. He's number 19 on the overall North American money list with 207 wins and more than \$2 million in earnings.

Doug McNair, who finished one spot behind Roy in the Canadian standings, jumped up from 34 to 20. He drove in 124 more races, had 61 more wins and upped his earnings by \$627,000. And his UDRS made a healthy jump from 0.244 to 0.310. McNair won the Fan Hanover with Bettor's Up and hit the break in the three spot at Mohawk.

Simon Allard moved from number 50 on the earnings list entering July of last year to 23 this. He had 46 more wins on 63 more drives and upped his earnings by \$685,000. His UDRS rose from 0.237 to 0.264. He was second at Pocono and 10th at Harrah's.

Andy Miller, who won the Beal with Devious Man, went from number 44 to 24. He had 88 more wins on 188 more drives and his money was up by \$610,000. Andy's UDRS rose from 0.249 to 0.341.

About The Same

Yannick Gingras, 37, who topped the money list at the end of the last three years, went from number five at the break in 2016 to number eight this year. Still, he drove in more than 100 more races, logged 31 more wins and upped his earnings by a modest \$36,000. The driver of Ariana G and Idyllic Beach also saw his UDRS rise a bit to 0.325. He won't be in eighth for long.

Brian Sears, 49, who was recently inducted into the Hall of Fame, was sixth coming into July of 2016, but eye surgery put him on the shelf for most of the first half this year, hence his numbers don't mean much. Sears is at 27 with 56 wins and \$1.7 million in earnings.

Scott Zeron, 28, who ended 2016 in fifth, finished the first half in 11th, just like last year. Things were pretty much the same, except for his earnings which jumped by \$118,000. He won the Fan Hanover with Bettor's Up. Marion Marauder saved it for the second half. Scott was fifth at Yonkers and 11th at Pocono Downs.

Trending Down

Tim Tetrick, 39, was on top of the earnings last at the halfway point in 2016, being the only \$4 million man; he was fifth this year. He had been third in 2015, when the World Driving Championship Down Under cost him early drives, and first in 2014, despite five weeks lost to recovery from hip surgery. This year, like several other top tier drivers, the pilot of Huntsville and Walner took it easy during the winter. Tetrick has 309 fewer drives, 80 fewer wins and his money is off more than \$358,000. The number one driver at Harrah's has enjoyed success with Long Tom and Every Way Out.

George Napolitano Jr, 51, is another snowbird. He's 15th now after being number eight last year. His drives are down by more than 200 and his wins are off by 74. Napolitano's money is down by a half million, while his UDRS is off slightly to 0.335. Still, he's number one at Pocono Downs, as usual, and number two at Harrah's. Despite few chances at Grand Circuit drives George has finished top 12 on the money list the last three years. He was second to Merriman in the dash contest in 2016; right now he's tenth and trending up.

Brett Miller, 43, has come up short of last year. He has 15 more wins on 27 fewer drives, but he's off by more than \$575,000. He was number 12 at this point last year but is at 21 in 2017. He was third at The Meadowlands and seventh at Harrah's. Brett, who gets plenty of live drives from the Takter Barn during stakes season, was seventh at the close of 2016.

Tony Morgan dropped from 18 to 25. He had 53 fewer wins on 194 fewer drives and he was short \$254,000. Morgan was number two at Dover Downs, number four at Harrington and eighth at Harrah's.

Josh Sutton dropped from 19 to 28. He had 81 fewer wins on 262 fewer drives and was short \$279,000. His UDRS was up from 0.284 to 0.301. Sutton was number six at Miami Valley, has been second at Scioto, and wins at a 23 per cent clip at Northfield. This is all about the number of drives.

Sylvain Filion went from number 20 last year to 41. He drove in 151 fewer races, converted on 60 fewer wins and fell \$773,000 short of this time last year. Sylvain has been fourth on the WEG circuit.

All-time dash leader **Dave Palone**, 55, has dropped from 14 to 26 on the money list. He had 48 fewer wins on 136 fewer drives and was short more than \$634,000. He's still number one at The Meadows, where he won at a 23 per cent clip. He was number 14 on the dash list.





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Bob Burgess: Harness racing forced to leave the Toronto market

Reading (the June 23) edition of Harness Racing Update (HRU) from Dave Briggs was a very disturbing experience for me. HRU featured the sad death of the iconic Herve Filion, the premature retirements of Jamie Martin and Dr. Ted Clarke and HRU's usual daily review containing the whole gamut of the seemingly unsolvable problems now faced by harness racing.

Unfortunately, almost everything we have always cherished about harness racing in Ontario seems to be gradually slipping away! And frankly very few of us seem to care! Collectively, we seem to be doing NOTHING to stop a steady deterioration in the quality of our racing product and in its importance and place in Ontario's entertainment and wagering worlds. The energy and the excitement and the crowds and nostalgia for the past are gone.

In my opinion, our standardbred horsemen should immediately RETAKE CONTROL of our destiny in Ontario and start to make our own decisions for our own benefit. Currently, we are allowing most important and life-changing decisions for standardbred racing and breeding in Ontario to be made by others. Management at WEG is calling all the shots.

Many of these current decision makers at WEG and in Government are well-intentioned. Unfortunately, they have little background knowledge or understanding of our unique standardbred history in Ontario racing. However Mr. E. P. Taylor understood our standardbred history when many years ago he carefully acquired almost all of Ontario's charters for harness racing on behalf of his Ontario Jockey Club.

Today, Standardbred Racing should not be forced to leave its large financial investment at Woodbine and to leave its important Toronto customer market just because WEG's Thoroughbred Division has peremptorily decided that it must operate three separate race courses at Woodbine. This

thoroughbred bounty includes two turf courses!

It is absolutely not equitable that we are going to be reduced to zero tracks in Toronto so that they can operate three! In addition, WEG's Thoroughbred Division still enjoys the luxury of superb backstretch stabling facilities while WEG has already abandoned our standardbred backstretch and dormitories.

In order to regain control of our destiny, I believe Ontario's standardbred horsemen need to acquire a proper understanding of TWO VERY IMPORTANT FINANCIAL MATTERS. Knowledge of these two financial matters is critical to understanding where we have been and where, in my opinion, we should be going with the Standardbred Division of WEG.

1) Standardbred Racing's large financial investment in the Woodbine Property

At the time of their sale of Greenwood Raceway in 1994 - Greenwood was standardbred racing's "Toronto track" - the Board of Trustees of the Ontario Jockey Club confirmed and guaranteed that their Standardbred Racing Division WOULD NEVER BE WITHOUT A STANDARDNBRED PRESENCE IN METROPOLITAN TORONTO!

This decision was made extremely clear to "the standardbred trustees" who were racing standardbred horses at Greenwood Raceway at that time. It was also made clear when all of the OJC Trustees voted unanimously to approve the sale of Greenwood Raceway to developers AND TO MOVE STANDARDNBRED RACING TO WOODBINE!

Very expensive renovations were then retrofitted for Woodbine to accommodate harness racing. Woodbine's main track was converted to accommodate winter standardbred racing. Ultimately, the gorgeous new standardbred paddock was constructed at a very significant cost.

Now WEG apparently wants to demolish ALL of these standardbred facilities at Woodbine (perhaps including the large decorative panels now in Woodbine's lobby honouring standardbred stakes winners at Woodbine for the past 17 years) and wants to spend many additional millions of dollars in a flawed attempt to winterize Mohawk. The extreme winter weather and the renowned prevailing fog at Mohawk and global warming will challenge the very feasibility of this false concept of winter racing at Mohawk. The Mohawk weather problem was properly understood by the Board of Trustees in 1994. The weather has not changed. Accordingly, it would be extremely foolhardy by WEG not to preserve our state of the art paddock at Woodbine at this time.

As a resident near Mohawk for the last 45 years I therefore anticipate standardbred racing being reduced through weather cancellations to racing one or two days a week for two or three months if WEG proceeds with winter racing at Mohawk. Standardbred horsemen will then be unable to survive the resultant and unnecessary loss of purse revenues.

To proceed to demolish our nine million dollar standardbred paddock at Woodbine prematurely is therefore wasteful to the extreme for WEG, particularly when neither of WEG's Racing Divisions is currently prospering and the hopes for viable winter racing at Mohawk are highly unlikely to be achieved.

A history lesson is therefore needed to clarify the situation. Through the remarkable foresight and benevolence of Mr. E. P. Taylor, both today's thoroughbred horsemen and today's standardbred horsemen will be able to share EQUALLY in the benefits of ownership of both the Woodbine and Mohawk real estate properties and facilities. Both sets of horsemen therefore are being protected in perpetuity by the farsighted actions of Mr. Taylor. Why? Because today WEG has NO SHAREHOLDERS. Standardbred horse people should take great pride in their continuing investments in both the Woodbine and Mohawk properties.

In addition to WEG irrationally destroying standardbred capital assets at Woodbine (that are worth perhaps \$25 million dollars) the standardbred horsemen at Mohawk will be further penalized by having to operate with a 12-month racing season at a single racetrack location. Historical examples of reductions to twelve month, single location meets in New York City (Yonkers-Roosevelt) and in Montreal (Blue Bonnets-Parc Richelieu) were extremely unsuccessful. Both of these major metropolitan standardbred circuits went out of business as a consequence of trying to race all year in a single location. Why should we be forced to attempt to follow these precedents?

It seems as if both attendance and betting handle deteriorate if there are no season closings and openings. The racing product cannot help but go stale and uninteresting to the public in these circumstances. To date WEG has expressed no remorse for its blatant attempt to place its standardbred horsemen in this untenable situation.

2) Rumoured Changes In WEG's Revenue Sharing Agreements

Because of WEG's proposed permanent standardbred racing switch to Mohawk, apparently there are recurrent rumours now circulating within the Thoroughbred Racing Division of WEG concerning its desire for changes in the current formula for Simulcast Revenue Sharing with the

Standardbred Racing Division.

If these rumours are true, the Thoroughbred Racing Division may suddenly try to increase its percentage over the 50 per cent agreed to by it under WEG's Simulcast Revenue Sharing Agreement negotiated and entered into with both groups of horsemen in 1998.

(By way of explanation Basic Purses in both Racing Divisions are now dependent upon the Government subsidies for purses distributed by the Ontario Lottery Corp. However, these Government subsidies to purses fall far short of the contribution to purses originally earned by horsemen under the Slots at Racetracks Program that was cancelled by the Ontario Government in 2013. The additional money distributed to both Divisions under the Simulcast Revenue Sharing Agreement of 1998 in turn augments Basic Purses and is very important).

This current rumoured interest in amending the WEG Simulcast Revenue Sharing Agreement by the Thoroughbred Racing Division follows almost 20 years of complete peace and harmony between the Thoroughbred and Standardbred racing Divisions following our Board of Trustees meetings held at The York Club in Toronto, that I attended as a trustee in 1998.

These agreements reached in 1998 for a 50-50 split of simulcast wagering proceeds were only settled unanimously at that meeting after very major negotiations between the Divisions and took into consideration many important factors. These major negotiations involved both the "thoroughbred trustees" who owned thoroughbred horses and the "standardbred trustees" who owned standardbred horses. Clearly, the issue of where and when the actual races were run and physically took place at WEG and the issue of the 50/50 division of the simulcast monies at that time were unrelated issues. And they still are!

Any change in the simulcast revenue sharing agreement, in favour of the Thoroughbred racing Division, is no more negotiable now than it was in 1998 when it was originally settled between the Divisions. The physical location of the various simulcast tracks is not material to this consideration. Undoubtedly, focus on this topic has returned because of WEG's frequently expressed intention to relegate standardbred racing to Milton (that it refers to as the fastest growing city in Ontario with 125,000 inhabitants) and away from Metropolitan Toronto with its potential 3,500,000 customers for thoroughbred racing!

No change is required here. If and when this fundamental issue is raised by WEG or its Thoroughbred Division we cannot bend as the issue of the Simulcast Revenue Sharing

Agreement has been settled in perpetuity by WEG and must stay that way.

CONCLUSION

As outlined above in detail this is the most serious crisis ever faced by Standardbred Racing in Ontario. We have virtually lost control of our business. Surely it is the current responsibility of our horsemen's groups, COSA and OHHA, to work together effectively on a daily basis to protect our horsemen and the standardbred industry as a whole. A United Front will be critical! Obviously, racing at the "B" tracks will also be profoundly affected by any and all proposed changes in policy by WEG.

Recently, both Bill O'Donnell of COSA and Brian Tropea of OHHA confirmed to me that they intend to make the changes necessary to achieve a united and strong front between COSA and OHHA. Hopefully this new cooperation will be extended to all of their future dealings with WEG, with other racetracks, and with all levels of Government. This good news is long overdue.

Please note that copies of this current Woodbine-Mohawk summary of affairs (expressing only my opinions) have been emailed to the principal interested parties, including the directors of COSA, the directors of OHHA, the directors of SBOA, James Lawson and other members of the senior executive of WEG, and the remaining "standardbred directors" of WEG, the Ontario directors and the senior executive members of Standardbred Canada and the senior executive staff of Ontario Racing.

I have also emailed additional copies of this current Woodbine-Mohawk summary of affairs to many interested standardbred owners, trainers and drivers.

Respectfully submitted,

— **Robert B. Burgess Q.C.**

WEG response to Burgess:

Standardbred Racing Community

Update on Initiatives and Response to RG Burgess QC

As the Chairman of the Woodbine Entertainment Group ("WEG") Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officer, Committee Chairman of the Standardbred Racing Committee and full membership of that Committee, we are responding to the letter of R G Burgess, QC in respect of Standardbred racing at WEG.

As an initial matter, we don't make decisions of any type which turn on preferring or advantaging Standardbred or Thoroughbred racing against each other. Our decisions are

made with reference to the best interests of WEG which we interpret as allowing the company to meet its core mandate of supporting horseracing and ensuring that we have the strongest possible racing programs and businesses for both breeds. It is that simple and there is no division in our Board (which as an aside, as currently constituted owns more and has a greater financial interest in racing Standardbreds than Thoroughbreds) or management on that issue. Our Board also benefits from the business experience of a diverse group of directors who aren't currently owners of racing horses but who have outstanding credentials in finance, marketing, government relations and business growth.

Our decision on moving to year round Standardbred operations at Mohawk was made after two years of careful consideration and with a very significant financial and management resources commitment to Mohawk being a world class Standardbred operation. In addition, but of great significance, we believe that our commitment to Mohawk greatly enhances the prospects for the best possible expansion of gaming, introduction of other entertainment offerings at Mohawk and exciting development of the full Mohawk Park site. The site will be branded Woodbine at Mohawk Park in May 2018 to capture the value of the Woodbine brand internationally, which is where we expect the most wagering growth in the future.

WEG already has the largest annual handle on Standardbred racing; our objective is to further improve those results. WEG already has the most comprehensive and financially accessible stakes program in Standardbred racing; our objective is to maintain and further enhance it.

We have demonstrated through the Pepsi North America Cup and our other signature racing events that Mohawk is an outstanding venue for great crowds, great wagering and great entertainment. It will be that much better with an expanded dining room and the addition of

VIP suites and other modern amenities. In fact, following the recent running, the NA Cup a prominent US Standardbred owner, who is also a member of the Hambletonian Society stated that "I believe the performance of the WEG team sets a high standard that ought to be the goal of any racetrack that intends to host a major event in the future". This level of customer and horsemen satisfaction has not been possible at Woodbine for Standardbred racing due to the inherent difficulties of running the races at a facility that was not built to operate as a Standardbred facility. With the greatest respect to Mr Burgess, most of his concerns are simply outdated or not factual. Except for big events and weekends with good weather, large live attendance is a difficult

objective. By a huge margin, most wagering is done remotely, more than 85% of handle on average is bet off-track. No one disputes that the on-track experience for Standardbred racing is better at Mohawk. The death of racing in Montréal and the New York City suburbs had nothing to do with alternating venues. Woodbine Thoroughbreds operate without alternating venues and we have grown the handle significantly each year. The decision to move to Mohawk is to improve and invest more in our Standardbred business; the opportunity to construct a second turf course at Woodbine is a byproduct of the first decision. Addressing one of Mr. Burgess's chief criticisms there is no debate that winter racing in Ontario has its challenges. However, the majority of our winter cancellations are caused by transportation issues (not racetrack weather) and at Mohawk we fully expect both less cancellations and more flexibility in adjusting races and schedules in the event of cancellation. There is no doubt that the Milton area is the heart of the Standardbred industry in the Province – it is where our horsemen live and work.

The other history cited by Mr Burgess refers to a different era when racing had a monopoly on legal gaming and our purses were derived exclusively from wagering revenues. Following the cancellation of the Slots at Racetracks program by the Province, WEG stepped up and committed our resources to Standardbred racing in Ontario by helping create and operate the Standardbred Alliance since 2014. This Alliance includes all three levels of tracks (grassroots, signature and premier) and has greatly benefitted the smaller member tracks in Ontario by creating efficiencies in racetrack operating costs. WEG incurs significant operational and other costs each year to support the members of the Alliance on matters such as:

- Horse Racing support including purse payment administration, race dates scheduling, TCO2 testing and race date applications
- Pari-mutuel wagering support including tote fees, decoder rentals, track settlements, import and export contracting
- Marketing support services and a robust players rewards program

Members of the Standardbred Alliance and WEG, pool pari-mutuel wagering revenues and share the proceeds amongst the member tracks to ensure each member track is sustainable. WEG provides open and transparent reporting of all wagering activities and purse distributions to each member of the Alliance, Ontario Racing, OLG, AGCO and the Horsemen's association on a predetermined reporting basis

and on request. We have voluntarily contributed nearly \$8 million in Horse Improvement Plan proceeds since the inception of the Alliance to ensure breeder incentives are retained at levels that make a difference to the Standardbred breeding sector in the Province. This is over and above the \$25 million annually, which comes directly from the wagering on WEG races. Additionally, WEG funds and guarantees minimum purse levels for live racing participants at each of the Standardbred Alliance tracks. WEG has funded in excess of \$30 million to Alliance members since its formation in April 2014. WEG is committed to continuing this funding and guarantee and has no intention of reducing it. With increasing competition from entertainment options across Ontario and globally, we have continued to grow the handle and in some instances break wagering records on our biggest events. Recently the Pepsi North America Cup handled \$4.1 million, one of our top results for a Standardbred card and The Queen's Plate set another record at \$13.5 million (up over \$2 million from 2016). The majority of this growth has come via digital channels and is driven by international wagering which is where many of the new opportunities are. To continue our commitment to the on-track experience and develop a new generation of fans, WEG has diversified its executive team. An outcome is we have made excellent progress with delivering our strategic pillar that mandates becoming a Guest Centric organization. Our work in customer segmentation paired with our internally aligned priority to deliver a thrilling experience for all guests continues to be a catalyst for growth in attracting new fans to horseracing. The synergy created amongst our internationally trained culinary team, on-trend events team, superior guest experience team and our dynamic marketing and sales teams are defining an everyday and special event on-site experience that is well positioned to dramatically grow our fan base. We have also invested in a Standardbred Concierge program to ensure that the owner experience is second to none. Our success is tied to driving attendance and creating winning experiences at our racetracks for all fans, horse people and stakeholders. You will notice that our decisions are made principally with reference to our customers and business, which is wagering and entertainment based. Attracting new fans to Standardbred racing at the Woodbine facility has proven very difficult over the years – and unfortunately we have even turned off a few fans. This is not so of Mohawk. We are very excited to invest in the property and make it a centerpiece for Standardbred racing.

Of course our plans also include the optimal use of our

land assets and profitable development of our properties to benefit our core business of racing. Perhaps the most important indication of our commitment to a successful long-term future for both breeds is our work on long-term gaming funding at both Mohawk and Woodbine. At Mohawk in particular, we secured a long-term agreement with the OLG to maintain gaming at Mohawk (to our knowledge the only Standardbred track in the province to have this certainty). This will provide stability and self-sufficiency. It will insulate us from potential changes in government funding policy and other pressures on government funding. This has required a huge investment of our management resources but places us in a very fortunate position as other jurisdictions face regular reviews and incursions on financing. Additionally, we announced a \$10 million investment into the facility to ensure we could fulfill our promise to ensure that Mohawk becomes the world-class venue we envision. Our horse people are critical stakeholders. Our consultations with and feedback from horse people indicated that they favour our decision. Further our dialogue with them remains on-going. WEG recently commenced detailed work on a long-term development master plan for the Mohawk property centred around Standardbred racing. The first group that our Master Plan consultants met with were members of the Board of COSA. WEG has no intention to change the revenue split to disadvantage Standardbred racing. WEG is committed to the growth and prosperity of the racetracks in the Standardbred Alliance and providing ongoing support for the Standardbred breeders in the Province. This commitment will remain in place as will WEG's goal to maintain and consolidate Woodbine at Mohawk Park as the number one Standardbred racetrack in North America. In conclusion, we are convinced that the move to Woodbine at Mohawk Park will be an enormous success. We are committing the financial and executive resources to support that. It will be a fantastic facility. As outlined above, our business is strong and our Standardbred business is treated very well, as it should be. We look forward to doing even better. We invite questions from and dialogue with our horse people and other stakeholders.

Sincerely,

H. B. Clay Horner, James J. Lawson, John D. Fielding, Douglas Millard | Chairman, CEO, Board of Directors, Board of Directors

Questioning Big M condition

I've owned harness horses for nearly 40 years and I've bet on horses for almost 50 years. Why do we see condition races like the second race at The Meadowlands Saturday night (July 8)?

Here is the condition: "N/W \$11,500 (Mares \$12,750) in Last 5 Starts AE: N/W 5 (Mares 6) Ext PM Races or \$90,000 Lifetime AE: 3 Year Olds". The race was obviously written to give Walner a tightener and an easy win, even though there were two other pretty nice 3-year old trotters in the race. The racing secretary could just as easily added some money to the (paltry) purse and called it a '3-Year Old Open Trot' or he could have just sent a check for \$6,500 to the owners of Walner.

I don't blame Linda Toscano – you take what you can get – but that condition just cheats other owners and trainers who have horses that fit the primary condition. The race wasn't unbettable it just reduced the Pick-3 to a Pick-2 and the trifecta became a perfecta, but it did cheat owners of horses who fit the primary condition and that is just wrong.

– **Dave Miller / Ocala, FL**

HARNESS RACING UPDATE

About Harness Racing Update

Harness Racing Update is owned by HRU Publications of Millwood, NY and will publish Fridays and Sundays November through April. HRU will add Saturday editions in late-May through October, publishing 3 days per week, and of course will add editions throughout the year as major news breaks.

Editor: Dave Briggs

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