



HRU

HARNESS RACING

— UPDATE —



**Beau
knows
perfection**

Rookie sensation Beau Jangles wins Dan Patch Horse of the Year and Pacer of the Year to remain undefeated in races and awards.

Monday, February 23, 2026

Bow to Beau

Beau Jangles is the first Dan Patch Horse of the Year winner never to have raced in the United States. He's also the first male 2-year-old voted top honors in both the U.S. and Canada. He was also named Pacer of the Year. Lexus Kody was named Trotter of the Year.

by Dave Briggs



Dave Landry

That Beau Jangles stands astride North America this morning was far from a lock despite the fact he has never tasted defeat. He has also never raced in the United States and now is the first horse in history to be named the U.S. Harness Writers Association's (USHWA) Dan Patch Horse of the Year (HOY) without going to post on U.S. soil.

The award was announced Sunday night (Feb. 22) at the 2025 Dan Patch Awards, presented by Caesars Entertainment, in front of a crowd of 350 at the Rosen Shingle Creek in Orlando, FL. Beau Jangles was also named the Pacer of the Year and Lexus Kody was unveiled as the Trotter of the Year.

In the end, Dan Patch HOY voters rewarded perfection over proximity; accolades over age.

In one of the most intriguing HOY races in recent memory, Beau Jangles – a wholly American-owned, Ontario-sired and Ontario-bred freshman pacing colt that never raced outside of that province – defeated 3-year-old pacing colt Louprint 59-30 in the voting, with sophomore pacing filly Miki And Minnie



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HARNESS RACING UPDATE

ABOUT HARNESS RACING UPDATE

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CONGRATULATIONS TO DAN PATCH HORSE OF THE YEAR!



BEAU JANGLES

p,2, 1:48.3s-'25 (\$1,688,750)
 Cattlewash - Mrs Major Hill

Breeder: Tara Hills Stud Ltd.
 Owners: Graham Grace Stables Llc, Kiwi Stables Llc, Bolton Stables
 Trainer: Dr. Ian Moore
 Driver: Bob McClure
 Caretaker: Riley Noble

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Photo: New Image Media



Team Beau Jangles after winning the Metro Pace at Woodbine Mohawk Park (from left): Jonathan Roberts, Bob McClure, Dr. Ian Moore, Nancy Moore, Adam Ainspan and Ed Bolton.

New Image Media

third with 21 votes and Lexus Kody fourth with nine from 133 ballots returned. Yo Tillie (7), 2024 HOY Twin B Joe Fresh (2), On To Norway (2), Ervin Hanover (1) and Setyoursightshigh (1) also received Horse of the year votes.

In the process, Beau not only swept all his races on the track, he swept all the awards, too. In terms of the latter, he became the first 2-year-old male pacer to be voted Horse of the Year in both Canada and the U.S. and also just the fifth 2-year-old to win the Dan Patch HOY in its 78-year history.

“He’s won everything we could ever imagine him winning, and I never imagined that it would ever happen,” said Beau Jangles’ part-owner Jonathan Roberts. “I’m still in awe of Breeders Crown night, where he actually finished the year undefeated. It’s one of those things you always kind of hope is going to happen, but then it happens, and you don’t even think it’s real. It took a while for that to set in and then for him to go on and win these awards, it’s just been unreal. I don’t know if a horse has absolutely swept the awards in a long time, or a freshman has ever done it.”

Principal owner Adam Ainspan said, “There’s only been four horses who’ve been 2-year-olds and undefeated that have been Horse of the Year in thoroughbred or standardbred racing, ever. So, it’s just really incredible. We certainly saw his talent but never expected this.”

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 - Triathlon AS, 1:52.3f -'25 (\$704,463)**
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 - Diva EK IT, (\$676,009)**
 - No Drama Please, 1:53.2f (\$672,009)**

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2,1:53.4; 3,1:50.2-'25
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New Jersey Classic Final, [G2] Del Miller,
Kentucky Sire Stakes final, etc.

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William Pollack and Bruce Areman.
Bred by Hickory Lane Farm and Black Creek Farm.



**Dan Patch 2-Year-Old
Trotting Filly of the Year**

Setyoursightshigh

2,1:53.1-'25 (\$678,159)

In Range - Special Interest - Cantab Hall

Winner of 7 of 11 starts at 2, including
Ohio Sire Stakes final, Next Generation,
three legs of Kentucky Sire Stakes, etc.;
second [G1] Breeders Crown,
Kentucky Sire Stakes final, etc.

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**Dave Landry
Beau Jangles
and caretaker
Riley Noble
after winning
the Breeders
Crown.**

That results trumped nationalism is admirable given heightened cross-border tensions between Canada and the U.S.

Beau's trainer and veterinarian, Dr. Ian Moore said winning the Dan Patch Horse of the Year award, "was quite an honor, and it's even more of an honor [in the U.S.] when he never left [Canada]. It probably means more to [win Horse of the Year in the U.S.]"

Despite never racing stateside, Beau Jangles didn't duck anyone en route to a perfect 12-for-12 season. The two biggest Grade 1 stakes for 2-year-olds – the \$730,000 million Metro Pace and the \$700,000 Breeders Crown – were in Ontario in 2025 and Beau won both impressively against some talented challengers. In the end, Beau Jangles earned \$1,227,326, the most by a freshman pacer since 1986 and the fourth highest total for a 2-year-old pacer in history. Beau also posted a 1:48.3 record in

the Crown final, which was also the colt's final race of 2025. It is the fastest mile, ever, by a 2-year-old on Canadian soil.

A son of Cattlewash out of Mrs Major Hill, Beau Jangles was bred by Tara Hills Stud in Port Perry, ON where Cattlewash stands. Beau Jangles was sold for \$65,000 out of the Preferred Equine consignment at the 2024 Standardbred Horse Sales Company yearling auction in Harrisburg, PA.

The pacer is owned by Graham Grace Stables LLC of Clifton, VA (Ainspan and Mary Beth Roberts), Kiwi Stables LLC of La Plata, MD (Anne Hooper and Jonathan Roberts) and the Bolton Stables of Clermont, FL (Ed, Garth and Philip Bolton, plus John Draper).

Beau is trained by veterinarian Dr. Ian Moore and driven by Bob McClure. Riley Noble is Beau Jangles' caretaker.

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Brad Conrad
Trotter of the Year Lexus Kody (Yannick Gingras) winning the Dayton Trotting Derby.

BEAU DELAYED MOORE'S RETIREMENT, REWARDED MCCLURE'S LIFE CHOICE

That karma played a role in this story is not surprising. Most highly-successful horses need a little divine intervention to reach the pinnacle. Beau may have had more than his share.

In November of 2024, Beau's owners asked Moore to inspect the yearling then called TH Bo Jangles at the Harrisburg sale. The relationship began a year earlier when Moore had taken the owners' trotting filly Call Me Goo when she was sent to Canada to race in the Casual Breeze and Elegantimage at Woodbine Mohawk Park. Moore reported back that he liked TH Bo Jangles, but was concerned he was a little too large for a 2-year-old.

It was Ainspan, the principal owner and a fellow veterinarian, that loved TH Bo Jangles' yearling video and ultimately asked Moore to buy him.

"He just looked so athletic and folks were telling me that the Cattlewashes were looking good," Ainspan said.

Afterward, the owners asked Moore to take the horse now renamed Beau Jangles in honor of one of Ainspan's dogs named Beau. After finding enough help, Moore agreed to take Beau, despite the fact the 72-year-old trainer was quietly contemplating retirement when the 2025 season ended.



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4,1:50 (\$1,512,866)

Trotting Broodmare of the Year
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Of course, that retirement is on hold now as Moore is happily prepping Beau Jangles in Florida for the colt's sophomore campaign.

But perhaps the biggest stroke of luck in this story involves Ontario-based McClure.

A devoted father to his two young sons, the driver purposely opted out of travelling the Grand Circuit as much to be home for his children. That decision directly led to him landing the drive on Beau Jangles. Moore drove Beau himself in the colt's first qualifier and then handed the reins to Louis-Philippe Roy for the pacer's second qualifier. When it came time for Beau Jangles' first pari-mutuel start in an Ontario Sires Stakes (OSS) Gold Series leg on July 5 at Woodbine Mohawk Park, Roy was away driving at The Meadowlands. Moore handed Beau's reins to McClure and the tandem promptly dominated in 1:50.1. McClure kept the drive.

"I made a commitment at the start of this year that I didn't want to travel anymore," McClure said. "I wanted to be home more with my kids. And, you know, the time at home was definitely worth the decision, but Beau Jangles was really worth the decision."

"Maybe it's karma. Maybe it's not, I don't know. You take the good fortune, and you do the best you can with it. But I think anybody, anybody in the top 100 drivers in North America, could have sat behind this guy and done exactly the same thing."

For Tara Hill Stud, having the good fortune to land Cattlewash as a stallion, led the farm – with help from bloodstock consultant Bruce Brinkerhoff – to acquire the mare Mrs Major Hill to breed to Cattlewash.

The result was Beau Jangles, a colt that made history in multiple ways on Sunday night.

Other than being the first Dan Patch Horse of the Year that has never raced in the United States, Beau Jangles is:

- The first male 2-year-old of either gait to be named the Horse of the Year in both Canada and the U.S.
- The second 2-year-old to win the top horse award in both countries following pacing filly JK She'salady in 2014 (who had an identical 12-for-12 record).
- The 15th horse of any age, gender or gait to win the Horse of the Year award in both countries in the same year going back to 1989 when the O'Brien Horse of the Year award was first presented.
- The fifth 2-year-old, the fourth male 2-year-old and the third 2-year-old male pacer to be named Dan Patch Horse of the Year. The other 2-year-olds to be voted HOY were: pacing colt Bret Hanover (1964), trotting colt Nevele Pride (1967), pacing colt Niatross (1979) and pacing filly JK She'salady (2014)
- The sixth Ontario-sired horse to be voted the Dan Patch Horse of the Year – all coming in the 17 years since Somebeachsomewhere first did it 2008 and was followed by San Pail (2011), Bee A Magician (2013), Tall Dark Stranger (2020) and Bulldog Hanover (2022).



CONGRATULATES DAN PATCH CHAMPIONS!

APEX

2, 1:51.4s-'25 (\$870,599)

Walner - Mission Brief by Muscle Hill

TWO-YEAR-OLD MALE TROTTER

Owned by: Jeffrey Snyder,
S R F Stable, Steve Stewart

Trained by: Marcus Melander

Bred by: Mission Brief Stable

YO TILLIE

3, 1:50.2-'25 (\$1,277,421)

Tactical Landing - Consolidator by Triumphant Caviar

THREE-YEAR-OLD FEMALE TROTTER

Owned by: William Pollack,
Bruce Areman, Andrew Harris

Trained by: Andrew Harris

Bred by: Gbw Breeding Farms Inc.,
Black Creek Farm

WARRAWEE MICHELLE

4, 1:50f-'25 (\$1,508,415)

Walner - Sound Check by Yankee Glide

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Jessica Hallett

Lexus Kody and 2025 Fair Island Farm Caretaker of the Year Joseph 'Jo Jo' Tosies after winning the Yonkers International Trot.

CHANNELLING HOLLYWOOD HEYDEN FOR THIS ONE

Also notable is the fact Beau Jangles is just the third Ontario-bred Dan Patch Horse of the Year and all three have remarkable ties. The first Ontario-bred Dan Patch Horse of the Year was Bunny Lake, who won the award in 2001. Bunny Lake was bred by the late Canadian Hall of Famer Peter Heffering, the founder of Tara Hills Stud in Port Perry, ON that produced Beau Jangles. The farm is now operated by Heffering's son, David. San Pail, the other Ontario-bred Dan Patch Horse of the Year (2011), was bred by Glenn Van Camp of Port Perry. That means all three Ontario-bred winners of the award were bred in the same small town that has a population of just 10,000.

That Lexus Kody is also Ontario-sired and Ontario-bred gave that province's program a sweep of the top Dan Patch awards.

Seven-year-old gelding Lexus Kody became the oldest Trotter of the Year since fellow Ontario-sired and bred San Pail in 2011. Lexus Kody received 57 votes in that category. He was followed by Yo Tillie with 49, 3-year-old trotting colt Super Chapter with 13, On To Norway with seven, 3-year-old trotting colt Emoticon Legacy and 6-year-old trotting mare M-M's Dream with two each and Setyoursightshigh, 2-year-old trotting colt Apex and 4-year-old trotting mare Warrawee Michelle with one apiece.

Lexus Kody, a son of Archangel out of Lexus Helios, was bred by Norm Dunstan of Caledon, ON, is owned by Burke Racing Stable, Weaver BrusceMI LLC, and Phil Collura, trained by Ron



NIJINSKY - NEW!

p, 2, 1:53.4s; 3, 1:47.3 -'24 (\$1,486,157)

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- Winner of \$167,000 Simcoe Stakes (1:48.4)
- Winner of \$140,000 & \$94,000 Ontario Sires Stakes Gold legs
- Winner of Somebeachsomewhere (1:49)
- Second in Breeders Crown elimination & \$600,000 Final at The Meadowlands
- Second in \$267,960 Progress Pace Final

STAKES WINNER AT 4

- Winner of Graduate division at The Meadowlands (1:48.4) & division at Woodbine-Mohawk (1:48.3)

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Burke and was driven most in 2025 by Yannick Gingras. He is groomed by Joseph "Jo Jo" Tosies, who is the 2025 Fair Island Farm Caretaker of the Year.

In an 11-week span between Aug. 30 and Nov. 15, Lexus Kody won five of six graded stakes (three Grade 1s and two Grade 2s), posted the fastest trotting mile on Canadian soil in history (1:49.1), earned \$1,186,500 and travelled 2,130 miles between five tracks to do it. It is one of the most prolific and gruelling streaks in harness racing history.

Lexus Kody also led all North American horses in earnings with \$1,317,651, a total that ranks second, all time, for North American purses for an older trotter.

In voting for Pacer of the Year, Beau Jangles received 62 votes followed by Louprint with 39, Miki And Minnie with 25, Twin B Joe Fresh with five and Ervin Hanover and 3-year-old colt Sippinonsearoc with one each.

Roberts said the best part is Beau Jangles is bigger, stronger and just getting started.

"I think it's an unbelievable thing for the business," Roberts said. "Every few years, it seems like we get a horse that catches people's attention. You know, there's a Jiggy Jog, or there's a Bulldog Hanover, a Somebeachsomewhere, or some horse to that effect. To have a freshman do this, and have all this anticipation and everything moving into next year, I think it's going to create a buzz that the industry definitely needs, and it's going to be unreal for the sport."

It's also unreal for Roberts, a man that scored his 5,000th career driving win on Monday (Feb. 16) at Rosecroft Raceway and was scheduled to train Beau Jangles for the first time this morning.

"I'm on cloud nine," Roberts said. "You come down here, you sweep the awards with a 2-year-old, and I get to go train him.

"I get to go train the Horse of the Year [Monday] morning for the first time."

Previously announced Dan Patch divisional champions also were honored Sunday at the banquet.

Division-winning pacers in addition to Beau Jangles were 2-year-old filly Loua Dipa, Louprint, Miki And Minnie, Ervin Hanover and Twin B Joe Fresh. Division-winning trotters in addition to Lexus Kody were Apex, Setyoursightshigh, Super Chapter, Yo Tillie, and Warrawee Michelle.

Other honorees included Stan Bergstein-Proximity Achievement Award winner Bill O'Donnell, Driver of the Year Jason Bartlett, Trainer of the Year Ron Burke, Owner of the Year Burke Racing/Weaver Brussemi, and Rising Star Braxten Boyd.

Also recognized at the banquet were the members of the 2026 Hall of Fame class, which will be inducted on July 5 at the Harness Racing Museum and Hall of Fame in Goshen, N.Y.: Dr. John Egloff, Marvin Katz, and David Reid, as well as communicators Derick Giwner and Ellen Taylor.

A complete list of winners can be found [here](#) on the U.S. Harness Writers Association's website.

*with files from Ken Weingartner /
USTA media relations manager*

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**DAN PATCH
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Stables-Bolton Stables

TRAINER: Dr. Ian Moore

DRIVER: Bob McClure

CARETAKER: Riley Noble

BREEDER: Tara Hills Stud Ltd



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BETWEEN THE LINES

with **BRETT STURMAN**

Beau Jangles is super early favorite for next year's Dan Patch Horse of Year

by **Brett Sturman**

When Beau Jangles was named Horse of the Year at last night's (Feb. 22) U.S. Harness Writers Association's (USHWA) Dan Patch awards, his status as the way-too-early leading choice for next year's U.S. Horse of the Year award was already determined.

The unbeaten pacing freshman who has already been acknowledged as 2-year-old pacer of the year in both the U.S. and Canada, was also honored as the Dan Patch Pacer of the Year and scored the Somebeachsomewhere O'Brien Award at the end of last month as Canada's Horse of the Year. Beau's 2-year-old record already speaks for itself as he trains down for 2026.

How horses come back between ages 2 and 3 can be unpredictable, but there is a recent history of champion U.S. 2-year-old pacing colts coming right back, carrying forward with their form, and repeating the following year with divisional and, sometimes, Horse of the Year honors.

Most recently, Captain Albano went back-to-back in his division at 2 and 3 in 2023 and 2024. Perfect Sting did the same in 2020 and 2021, and in the immediate next crop, Tall Dark Stranger pulled off a far rarer feat going from 2-year-old pacing colt divisional winner to Horse of the Year, in both countries,

at 3. Prior to that, the last horse to achieve that feat of divisional 2-year-old to Horse of the Year was Somebeachsomewhere in 2007 and 2008. While Somebeachsomewhere won U.S. divisional honors that year at 2, he was recognized in Canada as Horse of the Year when he dead-heated in voter tallying that year with Tell All.

Beau Jangles is only the third 2-year-old colt pacer ever to be recognized as Dan Patch Horse of the Year. The two prior who have done it were Niatross way back in 1979 and before that you have to go back to Bret Hanover's 1964 2-year-old season. But what's fascinating about those two examples is that both Niatross and Bret Hanover repeated again for Horse of the Year the following year – the point being it's such a rare feat to accomplish Horse of the Year as a 2-year-old pacer that it's a strong indication they're special enough to carry their talent into the next year. In the case of Bret Hanover, he won Horse of the Year again at 4.

The big question, as always, is not only how a horse like Beau Jangles will transition from 2 to 3, but more about his other rivals. Just like Somebeachsomewhere had highly-formidable



Claus Andersen

Beau Jangles (Bob McClure) winning the Breeders Crown at Woodbine Mohawk Park.

Undeclared two-year-old and
Preferred Equine yearling grad
Beau Jangles



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DRI 2026 | Photo: New Image Media

Beau Jangles is only the third 2-year-old colt pacer ever to be recognized as Dan Patch Horse of the Year. The two prior who have done it were Niatross way back in 1979 and before that you have to go back to Bret Hanover's 1964 2-year-old season. But what's fascinating about those two examples is that both Niatross and Bret Hanover repeated again for Horse of the Year the following year – the point being it's such a rare feat to accomplish Horse of the Year as a 2-year-old pacer that it's a strong indication that they're special enough to carry their talent into the next year.

foes in his 3-year-old season like Shadow Play and Art Official, Captain Albano faced down similar horses like Captain Luke and Mirage Hanover. Captaintreacherous, who went from 2-year-old divisional winner to 3-year-old Horse of the Year was tested too with rivals like Odds On Equuleus and Sunshine Beach.

Staying healthy and overall luck plays a role, too. Who knows the impact to Tall Dark Stranger in his 3-year-old season if chief rival Papi Rob Hanover didn't end that sophomore year in July with injury.

For Beau Jangles, there won't be any shortage of threats to him in the upcoming season. Last year proved to be an exceptionally fast and deep group of 2-year-old colt pacers, and there will be threats from some of the more common names as well as

some surprises. Horses out for revenge will include the likes of 1:49-type winners Al Papi, Frantic Hanover, and 1:48.4 winner Brandon Blvd. I'd also include third-place Breeders Crown finisher Melillo, and though they never met last year, the late blooming Governor's Cup winner Gentleman's Club could be a top tier 3-year-old, too.

The similarities to fellow Ontario-loved Somebeachsomewhere are unmistakable. Both were unbeaten at 2, never left Canada and, once again, were division winners. Now Beau Jangles has done "Beach" one better by being voted Dan Patch Horse of the Year.

Despite racing exclusively in Canada at 2, Somebeachsomewhere made his presence felt in the U.S. in his 3-year-old season. Possible stakes engagements for Beau Jangles include the Meadowlands Pace and the Breeders Crown at Scioto Downs, as well as other opportunities for him to take his show to the U.S.

Pedigree-wise there's nothing to suggest that Beau Jangles won't be able to go even faster at age 3. If anything, the immediate pedigree only reinforces that he will go forward.

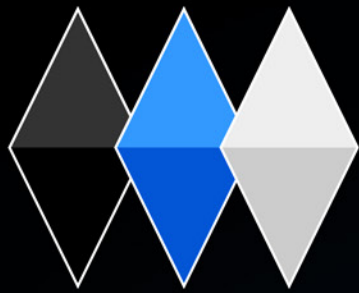
An Ontario-sired son from the second crop of Cattlewash, Beau Jangles has already shown replication of speed that his sire boasted. More importantly, looking ahead, Cattlewash earned a mark at 2 of 1:50.3 but as a 3-year-old blasted to a mark of 1:46.4 which equaled the fastest ever win by a 3-year-old of all time, shared then with Somebeachsomewhere. Beau Jangles has already won at 2 in 1:48.3. So, if he were to improve similarly as did Cattlewash, maybe a similar 1:46-and-change type mile is possible at 3. Going farther, the sire of Beau Jangles' dam is Bettors Delight and the sire of her granddam is Matt's Scooter, laying an even deeper foundation.

For next year's Horse of the Year award, Beau Jangles will go from being an unknown at the start of July last year to being the star of the 3-year-old glamour boy division where all eyes will be on him. With that, all early indications, thus far, are positive as Beau Jangles trains down at Southern Oaks Training Center in Florida.

As we have come to see, the 3-year-old season can be more tough and demanding as the schedule lengthens, and Beau Jangles will need to stay healthy. But the champion colt has handled everything thrown at him thus far and has done so without tasting defeat. As it stands, the burden will be on all other 3-year-olds in 2026 to step up and challenge Beau Jangles, who will start the year well positioned for a second straight Dan Patch Horse of the Year award.

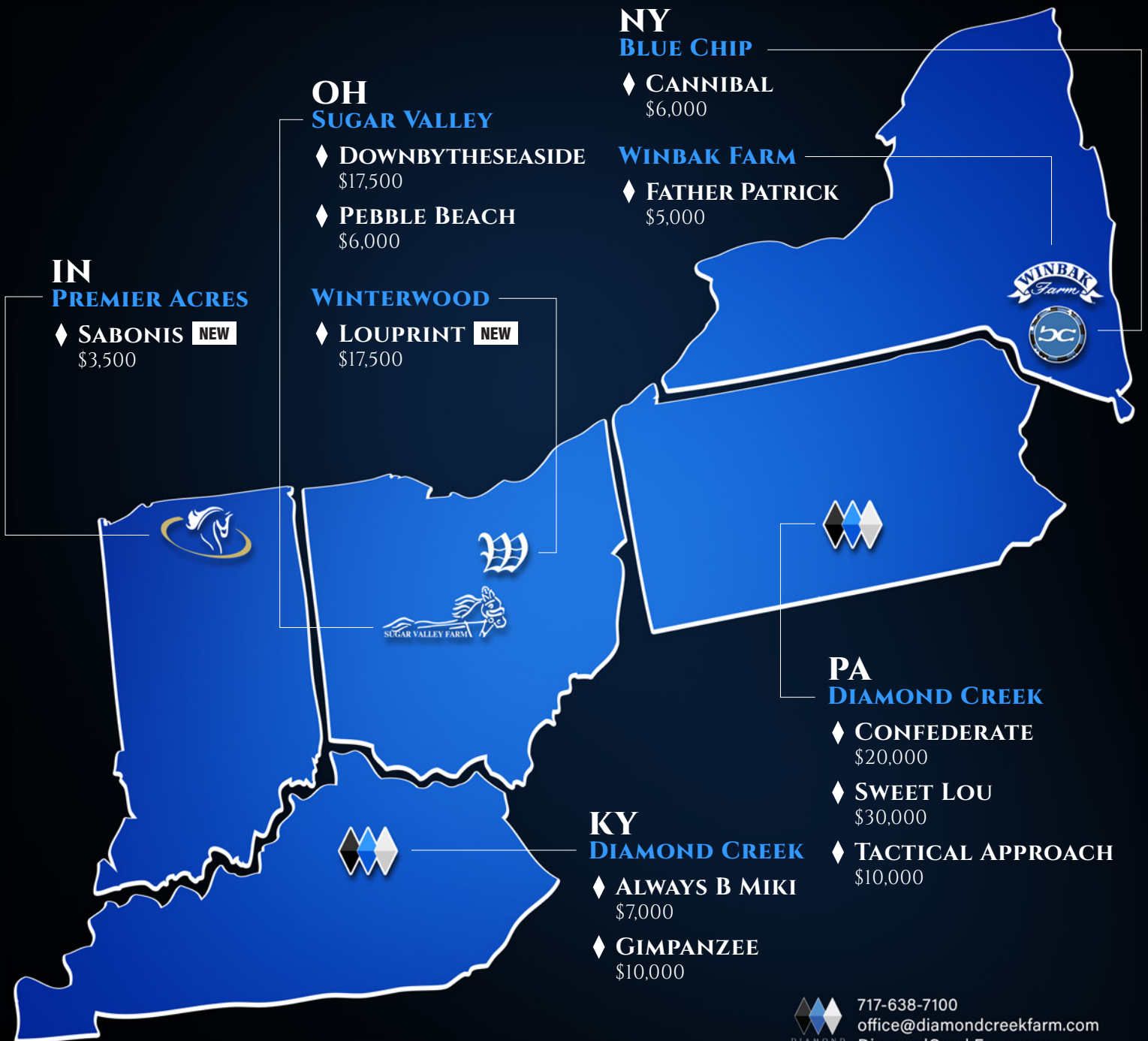
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THE DOWN UNDER DIARY

with ADAM HAMILTON

James Herbertson wins Ladbrokes Ultimate Driver Championship

Canada's James MacDonald finished eighth in the international competition.

by Adam Hamilton

The rise, and rise, of young gun Aussie driver James Herbertson continues.

And the likelihood of him moving to the U.S. to chase the next chapter of his career is growing by the day.

Herbertson, 25, thrashed a world class line-up of drivers, including five-time Canadian champion James MacDonal, in the Ladbrokes Ultimate Driver Championship at Albion Park.

Run across two nights (Friday and Saturday, Feb. 20-21) and 20 races, Herbertson gave nobody else a chance by winning six races and scoring by a remarkable 52 points. He finished with 194 points with defending champion Angus Garrard of Queensland and WA superstar Gary Hall, Jr. tied for second with 142.

“ I’m standing here as the face of the win, but it was a team effort. I’ve had so much support from family, friends and the people behind the [Herb Factor Syndicate]. It’s a tremendous thrill and honor to come and drive against the superstars in this series. ”

~ James Herbertson



Dan Costello
James Herbertson (center)
celebrates winning the Ladbrokes
Ultimate Driver Championship.

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Dan Costello

James Herbertson in action during the Ladbrokes Ultimate Driver Championship.



Garrard and Hall, Jr. finished first and second, respectively, last year.

MacDonald finished in eighth with 115 points.

“Well, he just whooped us, didn’t he?” Hall, Jr. said of Herbertson’s dominance. “I thought I’d be leading after night one with the strong book of drives I had, but ‘Herbie’ [Herbertson] somehow had a nine-point lead.

“If he wasn’t hard enough to beat after that, he came out and won the first heat last night [Saturday] and that pretty much shut the gate on everyone else.

“He’s a star. The future is in great hands when the two youngest drivers in it finish first and second [Garrard is just 22].

“At least I finished top three, so it gets me back next year. I’m sick of finishing second, I’ve got to win this thing.

“I love the concept. It’s just fantastic. It brings so many different parts of the game together and it’s fun to be part of and watch.”

Herbertson made the most of his opportunity after watching from the sidelines at Albion Park as the emergency for the series last year.

“I jumped at the chance when Ryan Spice and crew asked if I’d be their driver and started the syndicate [Herb Factor Syndicate],” he said. “I’m standing here as the face of the win,

but it was a team effort. I’ve had so much support from family, friends and the people behind the syndicate.

“It’s a tremendous thrill and honor to come and drive against the superstars in this series.”

It continued a remarkable 12 months for Herbertson.

Last year he created history by being the only driver to win the Australian Drivers’ Championship and Australasian Young Drivers’ Championship in the same season.

He also romped to his second successive Australian Drivers’ Premiership with an 83-win margin over Queensland’s Nathan Dawson, despite spending almost two months travelling through Europe and the U.S.

During his travels, Herbertson drove winners in the U.S. and Sweden.

It’s no secret Herbertson is considering a move to the U.S.

“I’m [turning] 26 this year and it’s time to look at the bigger picture,” Herbertson said late last year. “I feel like I’ve done the hard yards and am reaping the success and creating some opportunities. I’m also someone who doesn’t like to stand still. I’m always trying to be better, continually raising the bar, if you like.

“A lot will depend on how things are here in Victoria in 12 months’ time... will they be better? I hope so.



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Grade 3 \$85,112 Simcoe Stakes.



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(Wendy Doggett Photo)



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“ Well, [Herbertson] just whooped us, didn't he? I thought I'd be leading after night one with the strong book of drives I had, but 'Herbie' somehow had a nine-point lead. ”

~ Gary Hall, Jr.

“If things don't improve, then it'll probably force my hand to make a change.”

Winning such a high-profile series at the Ultimate Driver can only enhance his profile and chance of making an early impact should he move to the U.S.

“It's pretty surreal,” Herbertson said. “It's why I'm in the game. My mum and dad, they couldn't make it tonight, and all my family, without them I wouldn't be here. They got me started in the game and I owe it all to them.”

Herbertson's thoughts also went to former champion driver Greg Sugars, who died in his sleep in April last year at just 40 years of age.

Herbertson described Sugars as his “best mate, mentor and idol.”

“I lost my best mate and I've been able to go on and pick up a few things since, like this,” he said.

Herbertson and Sugars watched part of last year's Ultimate Driver Challenge together at Albion Park.

MacDonald, who followed Dexter Dunn, Yannick Gingras, and Bjorn Goop last year as the international star power of the series, said he wished he had fared better but treasured the experience.

“That was so much fun,” MacDonald said. “I've been in lots of driver series before, but nothing like this.”

“I wanted to be in it last year, but it didn't work out. I'm so glad it did this time even though the results didn't go my way.”

“It took me a while to get used to the track and style of racing, but I had some good moments. So much comes down to luck and the horses you draw.”

“But James [Herbertson] dominated us all. He's an outstanding talent.”

“What a great group of drivers they were, on and off the track. The camaraderie was special.”

“These are the things you make lifelong friendships from.”

MacDonald said he would stay in Queensland for a few days to enjoy the summer weather with his wife, Paige.

“It's quite a contrast from home at the moment and we'll head down to the Gold Coast to make the most of the trip,” he said.

LADBROKES ULTIMATE DRIVER CHAMPIONSHIP – FINAL STANDINGS

- 194 – James Herbertson (Vic)
- 142 – Angus Garrard (Qld), Gary Hall, Jr. (WA)
- 138 – Cam Hart (NSW)
- 127 – Pete McMullen (Qld)
- 119 – Robbie Morris (NSW)
- 117 – Luke McCarthy (NSW)
- 115 – James MacDonald (Canada)
- 103 – Trista Dixon (Qld)
- 102 – Zachary Butcher (NZ)

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EUROPEAN REPORT

with **THOMAS HEDLUND**

A new name in the Paris Grand Prix – He And Me stuns in Prix de Paris

by Thomas Hedlund

We knew it would be a new winner.

When the final leg of the Paris winter Grand Prix trilogy was decided on Sunday (Feb. 22), it was already clear that the \$440,000 Prix de Paris would be won by a horse that had captured neither the Prix d'Amérique nor the Prix de France.

No Hokkaido Jiel, no Iroise de la Noe – and favoritism ultimately landed on two foreign-bred contenders.

Sébastien Guarato-trained Frank Gio (Face Time Bourbon) and Daniel Redén's Francesco Zet (Father Patrick) were the two most heavily supported trotters in the 4,150-meter marathon. Turning for home, it looked reasonably promising for the latter.

But this is the Prix de Paris.

It is long. It is demanding. Energy reserves fade in the final stages. And historically, foreign challengers have struggled to outstay the French in a race that epitomizes the very essence of French trotting – where stamina is king.

There were multiple lead changes throughout the race, but Just Love You (Love You) spent the longest stretch in front, with **He And Me** (Bird Parker) tracking her every move along the rail under Eric Raffin.

The pace hovered around a 2:00 mile rate, and it was evident that Francesco Zet had difficulty relaxing in second-over when the tempo was not stronger. Driver Benjamin Rochard had to work through the first 1,600 meters before the Swedish-bred star finally settled into a rhythm.

Frank Gio was positioned two lengths behind Francesco Zet in the outer flow. With a lap to go, Matthieu Abrivard began



Gerard Forni

He And Me (Bird Parker) winning the \$440,000 Prix de Paris on Sunday at Vincennes.

inching forward three-wide with Frank Gio, and Hooker Berry (Booster Winner) followed suit in response to Frank Gio's advance.

Meanwhile, Raffin moved He And Me first-over outside the leader. When Rochard tipped Francesco Zet three-wide, the acceleration from the Father Patrick son was immediate and powerful. Within a few hundred meters, he had powered into the death seat.

At precisely that moment, drama unfolded.

He And Me broke stride in second-over. Raffin quickly steadied him, but just as the gelding returned to gait, he took several more steps on the break. Under normal circumstances, that would mean immediate disqualification. This time, however, the Vincennes stewards ruled that the gallop had not been sustained long enough to warrant elimination.

And so the race continued. With 500 meters remaining, the field swung into the final turn: Just Love You still on the lead, Francesco Zet parked outside and challengers fanned out wide. That was when Raffin struck.

He And Me launched his attack and immediately began to pressure Francesco Zet, who had already engaged Just Love You at the head of affairs.

With 200 meters to go, He And Me surged past to take command.

Behind him, Ibiki de Houelle (Love You) and Harmony du Rabutin (Royal Dream) closed strongly, with the latter securing second ahead of Ibiki de Houelle.

But on this day, no one could match He And Me. The Julien Dubois-trained 9-year-old delivered a genuine upset in the Prix de Paris, returning 13-1 to bettors and stopping the clock in a 1:58.4 mile rate over 4,150 meters.

Francesco Zet finished fourth, only a short margin behind the leading trio, after a brave, but ultimately insufficient, stamina effort.

Watch the race replay [here](#)

HRU IS SEARCHING FOR THE WORLD'S MOST STYLISH RACING COLORS

Harness Racing Update is on the hunt for the most beautiful set of racing colors in the world – and we need our readers' input.

There are countless color combinations and patterns to choose from, and it's far from certain that traditional French owner silks appeal to everyone. Likewise, American-style patterns might not always resonate with European fans.

That's exactly why we want to hear from you.

Which driver – or owner – has had, or still has, the most stylish racing colors in the sport of harness racing? Send us your nominations, and feel free to include a short motivation explaining why you think those silks stand above the rest.

We'll collect your suggestions and see where the standings are as we approach the end of March.

Send your nominations to: thedlund@hotmail.com

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HRU NEWS

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HARNESS RACING PRESS RELEASES, NOTES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rinker, Lefkowitz make ballot for Communicators Hall of Fame

Kim Rinker and the late Barry Lefkowitz were selected as the two candidates advancing to this summer's balloting for the Communicators Hall of Fame, as determined during the Saturday (Feb. 21) directors meeting of the U.S. Harness Writers Association (USHWA).

Kim Rinker has served in a number of editorial and writing positions in her harness racing career, and along the way has won three John Hervey Awards for outstanding journalism; she has also worked in publicity for several organizations. Rinker rose through the ranks of USHWA's officials ladder after serving as a chapter director. And Rinker is the longtime compiler/editor/designer of USHWA's annual Dan Patch Awards banquet souvenir journal, consistently giving advertisers what they request in ads while also producing a factual and wonderful-looking book.

It is USHWA tradition for the outgoing president to be elevated to chair of the board after their term at the top. It was ironic that Rinker will now be stepping away from a second "term" as chair, succeeding Lefkowitz, who had that position before passing away from cancer not long after the 2025 meetings.

When harness racing was his primary career, Lefkowitz was the publicist at Roosevelt Raceway, with many International Trot duties among varied items in his portfolio there, and he also worked at Batavia Downs as general manager, and in publicity and simulcast roles at Jackson Raceway, Scioto Downs, and Windsor Raceway. Lefkowitz's business was primarily in the insurance field in later years, though he remained a contributor to several statistical reports and other racing coverage. Lefkowitz's lasting legacy for USHWA will be his dynamic contribution to the revamping of the organization's financial and business situations, bringing his knowledge and applying it with vigor and a never-give-up attitude.

Rinker and Lefkowitz will go before the USHWA voters during the midsummer balloting for Communicators Hall of Fame election, as will those nominees for the sport's Hall of Fame during a July meeting of USHWA's screening committee, to be held in Goshen, NY. A nominee must get three-quarters of the yes-no votes in order to receive the grand honor. Announcements are usually made in the latter part of summer.

A summary release of the directors and membership meetings of USHWA will be sent out this midweek, after the stars of the past season honored at the Dan Patch Awards banquet, presented by Caesars Entertainment, get their Monday day in the media sun following the Sunday night banquet.

The U.S. Harness Writers Association (USHWA) is the leading group of communicators about the standardbred horse. USHWA conducts the official annual balloting for the sport's most prestigious honors: induction to the Hall of Fame and Communicators Hall of Fame, along with the selection of the Horse of the Year, Trotter and Pacer of the Year, and the leading divisional horses of each season. Each year USHWA hosts the Dan Patch Awards banquet, honoring the best and brightest performers in North American harness racing. This banquet is the Association's principal source of funding, and with generous financial support from the harness racing and breeding industry, USHWA is able to host the banquet at a world-class facility in a world-class manner.

U.S. Harness Writers Association

Kerr, Ladies From Hell big winners at London awards night

The Raceway at Western Fair District celebrated another exceptional season of harness racing on Saturday evening (Feb. 21) as horsepeople, owners, caretakers, and supporters gathered in the Top of the Fair dining room for the annual awards night, honoring the top performers of the 2025 campaign.

The evening highlighted excellence across all divisions, with standout horses and horsepeople recognized for their achievements throughout a memorable season in London.

The spotlight shone especially bright on **Ladies From Hell**, who not only repeated as Aged Pacing Mare of the Year, but was also honored with The Raceway's top prize as Overall Horse of the Year. The popular pacing mare put together another impressive doubledigit win season, scoring 10 victories and earning more than \$67,000 for owners Shae and Michael Sumner of London. Her consistent form and fan-favorite presence made her the clear choice for the track's highest honor.

Another repeat champion, **The Great Reset**, reclaimed his title as Aged Trotting Horse of the Year. The trotting track record holder posted 18 topthree finishes from 31 starts in 2025, collecting over \$46,000 for owners Lorne House of Dutton and Chantal Ruijs of Georgian Bluffs.

On the human side, **Austin Sorrie** capped his national driving title with a memorable local season. Sorrie led the country with 404 wins and a career-high \$2.7 million in purse earnings – 155 of those victories coming at The Raceway, earning him his first driving title in London.

Trainer **Lindsey Kerr** also celebrated a huge night with two divisional winners as well as taking home her first London training crown. Kerr had a career season, posting 83 wins, nearly \$550,000 in purse earnings, and a stellar .373 UTRS – 60 of those wins recorded locally.

The Caretaker of the Year, a special award recognizing the dedicated individuals who serve as the backbone of every racing operation, featured two winners this year co-winners with **Matilda Shephard** and **James Johnston** taking home the hardware. The Ruth Herbert Horsewoman of the Year award was also presented and this year went to well-known local horsewoman **Pam Forgie**.

The horse category awards were based on the leading money winners in each division who made a minimum of six starts at The Raceway during the calendar year, except the claiming categories which were based on the number of claiming wins at The Raceway during the calendar year.

The complete list of 2025 winners is listed below:

2025 Award Winners

- 3-Year-Old Trotting Colt – Cleveland Royalty
- 3-Year-Old Trotting Filly – Royal Flush Magic
- Aged Trotting Horse – The Great Reset
- Aged Trotting Mare – April Duford
- 3-Year-Old Pacing Colt – Silverwalls
- 3-Year-Old Pacing Filly – Twin B Bodacious
- Aged Pacing Horse – Prestige Seelster
- Aged Pacing Mare – Ladies From Hell
- Claiming Trotter – O Narutac Perfetto
- Claiming Pacer – Letjimitakeover
- Rookie Performer – Liquor Talkin
- Leading Driver – Austin Sorrie
- Leading Trainer – Lindsey Kerr
- Leading Owner – Colonel Schneider, Jr.
- Caretaker of the Year – Matilda Shephard and James Johnston
- Ruth Herbert Horsewoman of the Year – Pam Forgie
- The Raceway's 2025 Horse of the Year – Ladies From Hell

WFD media

First mare bred to Karl reported in foal

The Karl Syndicate is pleased to announce that the first mare bred to Karl on the first attempt, Ballyhooed, owned by Southwind Farms, has been confirmed in foal.

Karl stands his first season at Southwind Farms in New Jersey and his book is full and closed for the 2026 North American breeding season with 140 of many of the best trotting mares booked to him.

The Syndicate wishes to thank the numerous shareholders and breeders who are supporting Karl to insure a successful launch to his stallion career.

The Karl Syndicate

Southwind Admiral to stand in PEI for 2026

Southwind Admiral 2, 1:55.1; 3, 1:54.2f, BT 1:53.2f (\$156,225) will stand stud in Prince Edward Island for the 2026 season.

The son of Tactical Landing, out of the Chapter Seven mare Amber Ella, was a seven-time winner at age 2. He was the winner of the elimination and the final of the New Jersey Classic at The Meadowlands and winner of the elimination and the final of the New Jersey Sire Stake Standardbred Development Fund at Freehold Raceway.

He will be standing at Burkie By The Bay Stable, for a service fee of C\$2,000.

Please contact Robin Burke 902-940-3525 for more information.

Ron Coyne Stables Inc.

A graphic for a Facebook post. At the top is the Facebook logo. Below it is a photo of a racetrack with a large grandstand. Under the photo is the CHRO logo and the text 'Harness Racing Update'. The main text reads 'HARNESS RACING UPDATE ON facebook' in large, bold letters. At the bottom is the URL 'www.facebook.com/HarnessRacingUpdate/'.