



Winning is in their blood.
What is in their joints?

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#)

Sunday, May 17, 2020

Gural hoping to open NY tracks June 1 and Meadowlands June 5

New York governor Andrew Cuomo announced Saturday that all the state's racetracks can reopen June 1 without spectators. Gural is hoping New Jersey governor Phil Murphy will agree to a similar timeline for the Big M.

by Bill Finley

Things are starting to fall in place for the Jeff Gural-owned tracks. New York governor Andrew Cuomo announced Saturday that all of the state's racetracks can reopen June 1 and Gural said Vernon Downs and Tioga Downs would be ready to operate by then. He is also optimistic that New Jersey will follow suit and penciled in June 5 as a possible opening night for the Meadowlands.

Gural said he has made an official proposal to the state to let him open the Meadowlands June 5 without fans allowed in the building and, though he has yet to receive an answer, he said he was optimistic the state would grant the request.

"I am pretty optimistic," he said. "Jersey and New York usually work in tandem, so I think there is a good chance."

Gural said the key to being allowed to race again at the Meadowlands is that it is an outdoor activity.

"Why wouldn't they let us reopen?" he said. "What they are doing is to open outdoor activities; that's their theory. They say it's much safer to be in an outdoor place than an indoor place. People will be encouraged to eat outdoors and go to the beach, as long as there is social distancing. We are basically an outdoor activity and people who are training these horses have been going to work right through. That was the argument we made to Governor Cuomo and we've made the same argument to New Jersey."

Once the Meadowlands starts racing again and for the first couple weeks of racing, it is possible that only horses who are based in New Jersey will be allowed to enter. Gural has been contemplating taking that step as a safety precaution to cut down on the chances of someone catching the coronavirus.

In today's HRU

<i>COVID-19 deals blow to Indiana breed development program</i>	page 3
<i>Return to racing perfect time for WEG to be bold</i>	page 4
<i>Remembering The Magic</i>	page 6
<i>Fonner North?</i>	page 9
<i>Ali Carpenter – A girl and her shoes</i>	page 12



**HRU WANTS YOUR
BEST FOAL PHOTOS
FOR OUR NEW FEATURE**

Foal of the Week

SEND PHOTOS AND AS MUCH INFORMATION
ABOUT THE FOAL & FAMILY AS POSSIBLE TO:
DAVE BRIGGS • HRUEDITOR@GMAIL.COM



“My main concern is that something could go wrong when we open and somebody gets sick and they shut us down,” he said. “It’s much safer if we stick to the New Jersey horses because we have some control over those farms. Another possibility is people could ship horses in, but not bring people in. They would have to make arrangements with a Jersey person to pick the horse up off the truck, race it, and then put it back on the truck. That’s something we can consider. We may be overwhelmed without the Pennsylvania tracks being open. We only race two days a week. But my loyalty is to the Jersey guys and not the Pennsylvania guys.” He said the restriction on out-of-state horses would likely only last a few weeks.

“We will just to have to see how it goes,” Gural said. “The most important thing is to get open and see how it goes. And then if we race one or two weeks successfully, then we can open it up.”

Like many business owners, Gural is hoping that testing procedures will advance to a point where it will be easier to keep everyone safe.

“Testing is the answer and everybody is waiting to see if they can come up with a test you can take at home or a test that takes ten minutes before you get the results,” Gural said. “That’s one of the keys to being able to let everybody in to

race.”

Since June 1 is a Monday, Tioga and Vernon could both open a bit later in the week. Gural had said earlier that he would not open his two New York tracks until their casinos could be up and running because there would be a lack of money for purses. He had since had a change of heart.

“I don’t think the casinos will be open until July 1 at the earliest and I know these guys are starving,” he said. “I figured I would suck it up. I don’t see how you can have a situation where we don’t open racing until July. That would be brutal. Another thing is that we need to get the New York Sires Stakes races going as soon as possible. I will lose money if we reopen without the casino, but I feel bad for these people. We can’t let people starve and destroy an industry.”

The Meadowlands has not raced since March 14. The original stakes schedule for 2020 was light through June, but does include the \$200,000 Cutler Memorial. The June 14 card at Tioga includes the \$175,000 Roll With Joe and two legs of the Graduate series.

CLICK HERE
To Share This Story



Dave Landry

Jeff Gural is hoping racing will resume at the Meadowlands around June 5.

THE SUNDAY NIGHT AUCTION

FIRST EVER ONLINE

**"TAKE YOUR PICK"
AUCTION**

for details visit:
Hoofbid.com



FIRST AUCTION
SUNDAY, MAY 17TH AT 7PM EST

Need to create a free account to bid!

**HORSES
FOR
SALE**

visit www.Hoofbid.com

REVOLUTIONIZING THE WAY YOU BUY ONLINE



Sign Up Today!

DOWNLOAD THE APP



COVID-19 deals blow to Indiana breed development program

With casinos closed and no money flowing, breed development is projected to drop from over \$13 million to some \$8.8 million in 2020, with the Indiana Sires Stakes being reduced to \$5.25 million from nearly \$7.6 million in purses in 2019.

by James Platz

Last December, the Indiana Horse Racing Commission (IHRC) approved a breed development plan that offered over \$13 million in purses, with a little more than \$1 million in new money when compared to the 2019 race meet. On Thursday (May 14), the Indiana Standardbred Breed Development Advisory Committee and Standardbred Advisory Board Meeting met virtually to rehash a program greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The challenge at hand is to reconfigure the 2020 program and present a plan for IHRC approval that will offer a budget of just over \$8.8 million.

Jessica Barnes, director of racing and breed development for the IHRC, provided details on the amended program and allocation of funds for each area of racing. In her figures, breed development is anticipating just over \$6.6 million from slots and table games revenue, down from the projected \$12.2 million noted in the December plan, meaning that \$2.2 million will be paid out of reserves to shore up the program. That figure is roughly \$1 million more than had been originally earmarked from reserves.

"When I started working on the program I didn't have the \$2.2 million in there. It made me sick to my stomach," she told meeting participants. "None of these things are pleasant. I'm thankful we do have some reserves."

Barnes offered after the meeting that the program has received \$4.16 million to date from casino activity in early 2020. She said that she budgeted "super conservatively," as a few factors are in play going forward. First, state statute requires that \$1 million from casino proceeds directed to harness racing be sent to the Indiana State Fairgrounds each summer. Based on the timing, early revenue after the reopening could go straight to the fairgrounds, leaving breed development waiting a few months before seeing new money in the coffers. Second, it is unclear when casinos will be operational in the state. Once operational, business levels may only return to a fraction of activity prior to the March shutdown.

On the Indiana Gaming Commission website, it states, "No reopening dates have been determined at this time, as the decision is dependent upon information that is not yet available. Based upon current guidance, it is not anticipated that casinos will open until after the beginning of phase 4. The Commission will provide reopening guidelines to Indiana casinos and post opening dates as they are



determined at www.in.gov/IGC." Stage 4 of the "Back on Track Indiana" plan begins June 16. Barnes did not rule out that if there is a delay in casinos reopening that more program changes could be required.

The reality of Indiana's 2020 breed development program is that all areas will take a financial hit, which equates to cuts across the board. Barnes' proposal calls for a nearly 34 per cent decrease to all line items. The Indiana Sires Stakes program, the largest of the line items, will see a reduction to \$5.25 million in total purses based on projections. Last season, the program paid out nearly \$7.6 million in purses. The question now is how many legs to offer. Originally, 3-year-olds were set to contest eight legs and a \$250,000 Super Final, with freshmen competing in six legs before the lucrative final. Barnes presented numbers for sires stakes that kept the format intact, as well as those eliminating one or two legs. Now, committee members must decide what formula will work best, balancing the number of racing opportunities against keeping purses for each leg strong.

"One thing to keep in mind no matter what we do, we're still racing for the same amount of money," said Scott Snyder, chair of the Indiana Standardbred Breed Development Advisory Committee. "Nobody is getting shortchanged. The money is going to be the same; it's just a matter of the number of legs."

Other line items cuts include breeders awards – decreasing from \$700,000 to \$465,000 – and Indiana sired overnight supplements and mini-series, lowered to \$1.525 million from a previously approved \$2.3 million.

One area that horsemen will see the biggest adjustment is in the Indiana sired late closers offered at Harrah's Hoosier Park. Funding projections for late closers shows a decrease from \$850,000 to \$565,000, requiring significant modifications. The Jerry Landess, Miss Windfall, Cardinal and Mya Tri series, which traditionally lead into the opening leg of Indiana Sires Stakes, function the same way in Hoosier Park's retooled 111-day meet, set to kick off June 16. Instead of a format of two legs and final, the series will offer a single leg and final in the opening weeks of the race meet. Seven other late closers – the Msnaughtbynature, Expression, Hal Dale, Go On BB, Ralph & Dorothy Rose, Bill Thompson and Tubby Trimble – are cancelled. However, race secretary Scott Peine said during the meeting he intends to write mini-series events with the exact conditions to provide opportunities for horses eligible to the scrapped series.

"The conditions would be written word-for-word, so there's

no nomination payment. People don't have to worry about nominating due to the uncertainty. They still get two good races in before the sires stakes without having to nominate to anything," Peine said. "They can race for a good purse right off the bat the first two weeks of the meet. It can get people moving in the right direction before sires stakes. We have plenty of flexibility writing overnights to replace them."

The biggest scheduling challenge may exist in the Indiana fair program. Money set aside for the Indiana Sired Fair Circuit is projected to be \$965,000 instead of the previously published \$1.45 million. The old budget had built in an increase in the championship races from \$20,000 to \$25,000 and boosted the consolations from \$8,000 to \$10,000. The new plan strips those purse bumps, and cancels the second series set for the fall.

Barnes said that based on the current projections and the cost of conducting race programs in 2019, there is money available for 11 or 12 fair programs, a considerable drop from last season. One option on the table is to reduce the guaranteed \$3,000 purse per division to \$2,500. Doing so might allow for the addition of another program or two.

Another catch is that even after restrictions are lifted July 4, some fair stops might not have authorization to conduct racing, which makes the schedule a moving target until more information is gathered.

"These are times that nobody foresaw. Everything is on the table," said Indiana Standardbred Association president Joe Putnam. "We're going to have to make decisions that won't benefit everyone. We're trying to put together the best program we can."

With the exception of the late closer cancellations and modifications, there were no hard decisions made Thursday. Committee members must ponder the options on the table before returning Wednesday, May 20 and finalizing the amended program for 2020. Interested parties that have questions or input regarding the program can contact Barnes via email at jbarnes@hrc.in.gov.

CLICK HERE
To Share This Story



Return to racing perfect time for WEG to be bold

With Woodbine Mohawk Park likely to be the biggest harness track to reopen soon, rewarding bettors with special promotions would provide huge returns in terms of handle.

by Garnet Barnsdale

If you open it, they – bettors – will come, at least with online wagers. At this point, I don't doubt it for a second. Speaking for myself, by the time this column is published, I will have reached day 25 of no wagering. Not a dime. That will be the second-longest streak of the past 35 years for me, and by the time Woodbine Mohawk Park starts back up in early June, I am sure to set a record, beating the old standard of one month. Not unlike many that prefer betting on harness racing, I have my nose on the gate ready to blast off when action resumes.

This will be an unprecedented position of power for my local track Mohawk Park and the Woodbine Entertainment Group (WEG) because when they start racing again, there will likely only be standardbred competition from smaller tracks in Ohio and New York, with the Meadowlands expected to reopen about a week later and no racing in Pennsylvania for the foreseeable future, sadly. So, yes, the bettors will come. But should WEG be content with just throwing the doors open, or is there something that could be done to create an additional buzz leading up to the re-opening?

Here are some of my ideas on how a buzz could be created in advance of the first card of racing, which by all recent indications should happen on the first weekend in June.

Imagine for a second that the doors were going to be thrown open and throngs of fans allowed in and it was business as usual? Would there be giveaways, promotions and food specials? Based on past performances, I am going to suggest that would be about a 1-5 shot. Woodbine does a great job promoting their biggest events.

However, we know that racing is going to be conducted without on track fans due to COVID-19 regulations that have been established by the province of Ontario. Therefore, there won't be any money spent on giveaways or promotions at the track itself. So, how do you create a buzz? There will never be a bigger opportunity than this for Mohawk Park to dominate the wagering market, which is great for WEG and

CEO Jim Lawson, who did an outstanding job during the pandemic providing regular updates on various media seemingly daily.

I'm not going to pretend to understand the machinations of the Canadian pari-mutuel system and if and how you could achieve some of these suggestions, but in a perfect world, I think that Mohawk Park could create a huge buzz that would likely lead to record handles if they took the wagering bull by the horns and tried any of these promotions:

If opening night is June 5, kick off the action by seeding the Jackpot High-5 with a starting pool of \$50,000 which is sure to attract more than the typical action that night. Assuming there are no lone jackpot winners and the pool grows quickly, set a mandatory payout date of Saturday June 20 and line up the typical 12-horse field for that race. Assuming Mohawk Park is still the only major circuit racing that night, the action should be huge on that pool. One only needs to look at some of the massive pools tiny thoroughbred track Fonner Park in Nebraska created with mandatory payouts that included carryovers during the pandemic to this point to

know how much handle can be attracted here.

Come right back on Saturday night with a 10 per cent takeout Pick 5 pool in the early Pick 5. Considering handle on this wager regularly attracts handle in the \$100,000 range with a takeout of 15 per cent, imagine what it would handle at a one-time reduced takeout on a night with close to zero competition for the wagering dollar? Is \$500,000 plus a bad guess? I don't think it is.

If there was ever a time to mass promote new account sign ups and offer as many incentives as possible, this is it. This one should be a no-brainer.

Either way, it'll be great to see familiar horses and drivers back in action and play the odd race while making some notes for future bets – which I strongly recommend as a valuable handicapping tool for at least the opening week of racing action.

CLICK HERE
To Share This Story



Dave Landry

When racing resumes at Woodbine Mohawk Park, bettors should be the focus.



Remembering The Magic

A conversation with Bill "The Magic Man" O'Donnell.

by Murray Brown

I had a chance to speak extensively with the man that I consider, for a stretch of maybe five to eight years, to be the greatest driver that ever put on a set of colors.

In the grand scheme of things, have there been better drivers than Bill O'Donnell over a longer period of time? John Campbell, Herve Filion, Michel Lachance and perhaps Brian Sears come to mind.

But for that proscribed period, to these fading eyes, there was nobody I've ever seen like the aptly named Magic Man.

In my conversation with him, O'Donnell referred to several people he has known through the years as being "part horse". That description applies equally to him.

He was able to think like a horse, act like a horse and perhaps most importantly show empathy to his "fellow horses."

I'm guessing that most of you reading this never got the chance to see Billy O weave his magic. What a show it was.

With the drivers of that era, there was Billy O, JC Superstar and when he came over from New York, Iron Mike Lachance. Everybody else trailed this trio.

Not that there weren't good, maybe even great drivers behind them, but these three stood out.

If you missed seeing them and the great horses they were privileged to drive, you missed a significant part of what was great in the history of our sport.

One could say it was mostly the horses. No doubt, that was the biggest part of it, but these three all came from fairly humble beginnings and worked hard to earn the privilege of driving these great horses.

To see them in action was a truly great treat. Sure the horses were the number one draw, but the drivers were not that far behind.



Dave Landry

Bill "The Magic Man" O'Donnell.

How did William O'Donnell reach that status?

His father was a part-time horseman who worked the coal mines on the night shift and trained his horses in the morning in Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia.

However, Bill says the truly outstanding horseman in the family was his uncle Art Porter who was his greatest teacher.

His uncle, although racing in what would be described as a small-time milieu, operated a first class operation.

Beginning at age 14, O'Donnell left Sydney Mines for Sackville Downs each summer to work for his uncle Art's stable of eight horses.

When Bill came to Art with a question relating to the horses, Porter would generally answer with a question of his own, "What would you do?" Bill would come up with a solution by himself with which Art might agree, disagree or amplify upon. This enabled Bill to think and figure things out himself – to think like a horse (my choice of words).

At the age of 17, he spent the summer in Ontario working for Ron Feagan. The next year he returned to Ontario to work for Bill Wellwood. O'Donnell returned home for a few years until the opportunity to work for Jim Doherty in New England came up.

A few years later, Doherty recommended O'Donnell to Pete and Iva Gray to be their trainer. Although O'Donnell didn't have a master plan of becoming a driver it just evolved because of a horse called Travelin Boy who was a top horse in New England. After a few years, more trainers were listing O'Donnell on horses to drive. O'Donnell moved to Saratoga in 1977 where things really changed for him as a driver. He then moved his small stable to the Meadowlands in 1980 where he raced for 21 years. In 1983, he gave up his stable and stuck to only catch driving.

"During my time there I was privileged to meet a lot of very good people who supported my career and became lifelong friends," O'Donnell said. "I was privileged to drive some of harness racing's greatest horses of that era. It was a long way from a small coal mining town in Nova Scotia to be a part of an industry that we all love."

Around the same time, another young Canadian named John Campbell gave up his stable and decided to concentrate solely on being a catch driver.

Thus began the O'Donnell/Campbell show.

Here are some of the questions I asked of O'Donnell during our conversation.

Who was the best pacer and the best trotter that first, you've ever seen and also driven?

"Niatross and Mack Lobell that I've seen; Nihilator and Valley Victory that I've driven.

Although, for a long eighth of a mile I never sat behind a horse as fast as Cambest."

Who of your contemporaries were the greatest trainers?

"In order I'd say Billy Haughton, Brett Pelling, Stanley Dancer, Steve Elliott and Bill Wellwood, Chuck Sylvester. I'd give Howard Beissinger and Lofty Bruce also eligible status."

Who was the toughest trainer you ever drove for?

"Lofty Bruce by far. Most anything less than a win was unacceptable. His instructions were: Leave, but not hard; Pull, but not early, hit him but not hard and win, by not by much."

Are today's drivers better than those in your day?

"Maybe, but not by much, if at all. There are likely more good ones than there were then. But great is great. The big difference is in the horses. Today's horses are just so much better. They are bigger, stronger, more athletic and can carry

their speed for longer distance than horses of even 20 years ago."

Tell me about some of the owners you've dealt with.

"Most were great people, the first were Pete and Iva Gray who had the dam of Mountain Skipper, the Whebby Brothers, of course Lou Guida and Billy Haughton. Probably the one with who I had the longest relationship was Jack Rollins, a noted show business impresario who managed Woody Allen among many noted show business types. I believe he produced all of Allen's movies. He passed away just shortly after his 100th birthday."

Did you ever get nervous before a big race?

"Not really. Maybe early in my career. Probably the first time I jogged one at the age of 8. I never did much planning before a race. I kind of let the race come to me and reacted as things played out."

Who had the greatest influence on your career?

"In order, I think I'd say my uncle Art, WRH, Jimmy Doherty and Bill Wellwood."

What do you want written on your tombstone?

"He had compassion."

How bad do you think we will be hurt by this Covid 19 pandemic?

"The sooner we get to racing, the less we will be hurt. Some people have been hurt irreparably. As Al Libfeld said last week, the yearling sales will be hurt. It's a question of by how much."

Please let me know the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the following names.

Herve Filion — "Part Horse. Maybe mostly horse. They broke the mould after GOD made him."

John Campbell — "Smart. Would have been successful at anything he tried."

Ted Wing — "Extremely well prepared. Did all the little things. Perfectionist."

Jim Doherty — "Gentleman Jim, but not on the racetrack."

Mike Lachance — "Tough competitor. Good guy. Never complained."

Bill Wellwood — "Great friend. Great teacher. Part horse."

Jim Whelan — "We both have the same goals, but work differently to achieve them."

Jim Lawson — "Great to work with. Committed to world class racing."

Henri Filion — "Great horseman. Made great speed."

Jack Darling – “Great guy. Loves business and is a credit to it.”

Trevor Ritchie – “Great driver. Usually there when it counted. Careful.”

Bill Haughton – “Great eye for everything. There never has been, nor will there ever be anybody like him.”

Stanley Dancer – “One of the tops ever. Perfectionist in everything.”

Chuck Sylvester – “No better person anywhere. Great horseman. Extremely patient. Could tell you very early what you had.”

Delvin Miller – “Great person. Great horseman. Contrary to many older people he embraced change.”

Myron Bell – “Great friend and supporter of mine. Loves and knows the business.”

John Simpson Sr. – “I loved listening to him. Doug Ackerman told me a great story about him. Someone asked him why Simpson was so successful. Doug said, ‘That’s easy, it’s because he’s the best damned horseman that ever lived.’”

*** Author’s Note-** Stanley Dancer said the same thing to me.

Hakan Walner – “Europe’s equivalent of Delvin Miller. Always looked ahead. A really good guy. If not for him American trotting would not have the European presence that it has.”

Ron Waples – “Friends forever. Incredibly hard worker. Ran a big stable as well as anybody ever. Great money driver.”

Keith Waples – “Canada’s Harness Racing God. Now in his 90s and sharp as a tack. When reminiscing with most of the senior horseman it’s seldom that Keith’s name does not come up in a good way.”

Fred Grant – “We’ve been friends since we were kids. Freddie worked for my dad in Nova Scotia.”

*** Author’s Note**— Fred told me a few stories about Bill. I’ll tell one. There was a time when drivers, even catch drivers, warmed up their horses before races. At about the time when that was changing and the drivers were becoming one trick ponies – kibitzing in the drivers room until they went out to race – more and more of them didn’t want to do it anymore. Fred, being from the old school had Impressive Lad in to race at The Meadowlands one night. He asked Billy if he would warm him up. “Sure,” Billy said. “What race is he in?” Fred said he was in the eighth. Billy said, “Okay, I’ll go with him after the seventh.” It took me a little while to catch on as well.

CLICK HERE
To Share This Story



JOIN OUR GROWING AUDIENCE TODAY!

Harness Racing Update is the only harness racing publication that provides thorough and provocative coverage of the sport from across North America - all delivered to you within hours of the horses crossing the finish line.

HRU is the industry’s leading information source for owners, breeders, drivers, trainers, racing executives and fans.

HRU is published in PDF format and distributed by Internet link, via email, to industry professionals around the world, allowing them to keep up with everything that is going on in harness racing.

HRU covers it all – race news, results and entries, commentary from some of the sport’s best writers, sales results, video replays, major stakes handicapping, letters from readers and so much more.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY FOR FREE

WWW.HARNESSRACINGUPDATE.COM/SUBSCRIBE

Fonner North?

Red Shores Charlottetown brings Canada's first live harness card of COVID-19-delayed season.

by Melissa Keith

Prince Edward Island is Canada's smallest province, but with an out-sized love of harness racing disproportionate to its land mass. It is also fortunate to have had only 27 residents diagnosed with COVID-19 since the pandemic crisis began — all have recovered. Red Shores racinos in Charlottetown and Summerside are far removed from densely-populated urban centers where the deadly virus has taken strongest hold. Tracks in those regions have now been unable to play host to live cards for over two months.

On March 12, Yonkers announced that live racing was on indefinite hold following the March 10 death of John Brennan, the track's Standardbred Owners Association of New York field representative. (Brennan had been diagnosed with COVID-19, in addition to underlying health conditions). The Meadowlands postponed racing from March 13 onward because of safety concerns. Woodbine Mohawk Park and The Raceway at Western Fair followed suit March 19. When Cal Expo was abruptly shut down April 1, it was the last North American harness track still racing through the widespread

Prince Edward Island



crisis.

Manitoba's Assiniboia Downs is now scheduled to become Canada's first thoroughbred venue to resume racing — May 25, without on-track spectators. Red Shores Charlottetown will be the national trendsetter on the Standardbred side when live racing returns Thursday, June 4, post time 6 p.m. (Atlantic).

Far from being dormant during stay-at-home orders and the lull in North American harness racing, the Atlantic Lottery Corporation-owned tracks stepped up their brand's online content: Livestreaming of horses jogging and training has proved popular on the track's website, as have weekly "Virtual Tack Room" chats featuring racing historian Jerry McCabe and simulcast hosts Lee Drake and Peter MacPhee. The trio have been chatting with guests such as Hall of Fame reinsman Wally Hennessey and Meadowlands announcer Ken Warkentin each Saturday night, with all participants taking part safely via webcam.



Gail MacDonald

There are no fans at Red Shores Charlottetown, but training continues toward an anticipated resumption of live racing of June 4, which would make it the first track in Canada to reopen.

May 8, Red Shores management announced the Charlottetown track surface would be graded and conditioned for upcoming race dates: From Tuesday, May 12 to Friday, May 15, it was largely closed to horses and horsepeople, in preparation for an unusually high-visibility season opener. Concerns about idled horses being ready to start were answered by the release of four qualifying dates: Saturday, May 23 at 12:30 pm; Thursday, May 28 at 6 pm; Saturday, May 30 at 12:30 pm; and Sunday, May 31 at 12:30 pm. (All times Atlantic.)

Adam Walsh is Red Shores' racing experience manager. He said PEI reopening dates were decided independently from what was happening in other racing jurisdictions.

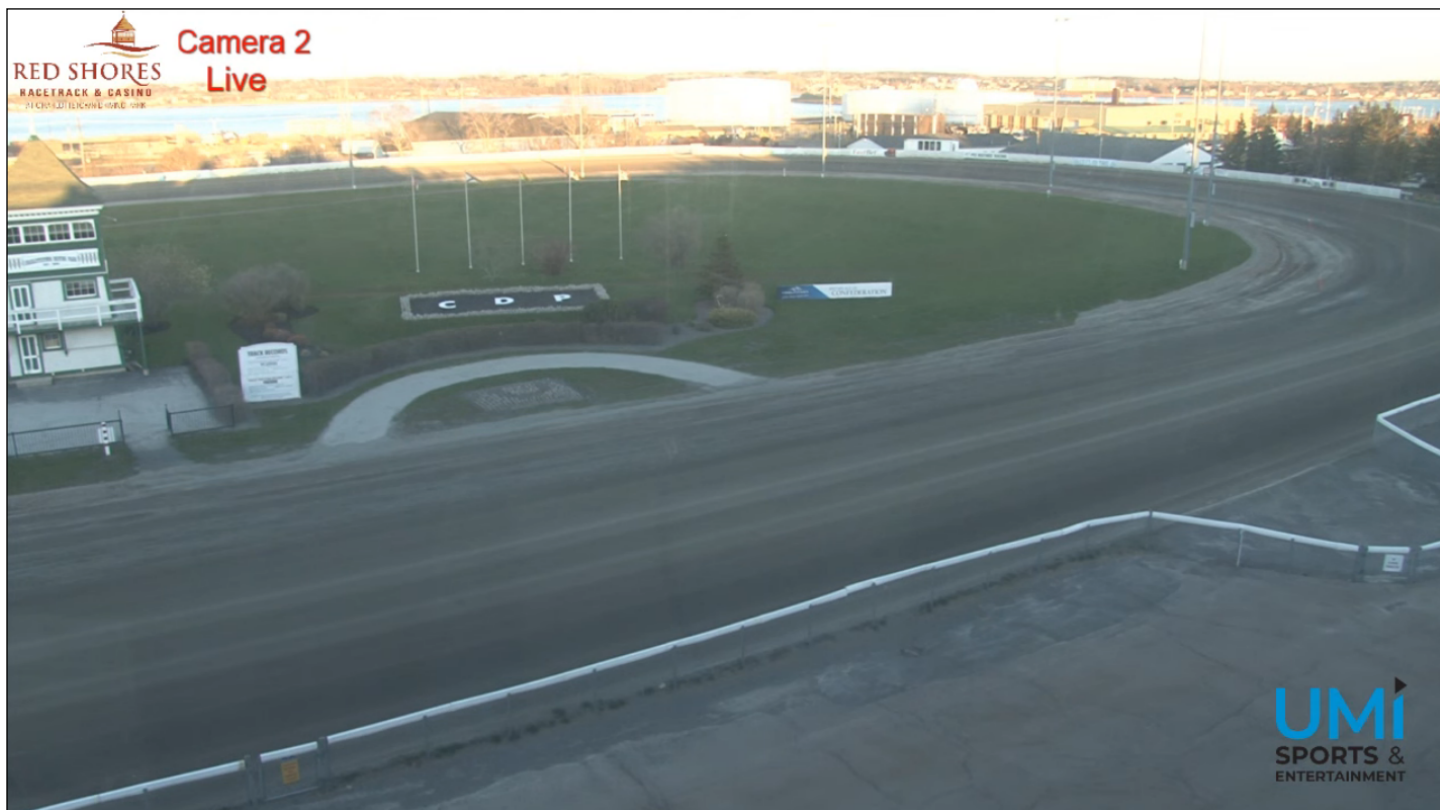
"It was never an intention to be the first to announce as the first harness track to re-open for live wagering in North America," he told HRU. "The plan was to work with the racing community in PEI and get the equine athletes back as soon as we could, while following any provincial guidelines around COVID-19. We have been very fortunate in PEI to have a small amount of COVID-19 cases, and the PEI government and PEI Chief Health Officer [Dr. Heather Morrison] have done a great job in controlling the virus, which has allowed us to get back to racing June 4th while adhering to guidelines in place."

Racetracks with backstretch stabling have found

themselves better equipped to handle the first stages of the pandemic-era comeback. "There are currently around 250 horses stabled on the grounds at Red Shores Charlottetown," said Walsh. "Racing will not be restricted to only these horses once live racing starts. We will allow ship in entries from Island-stabled horses, [but] horses from outside the province are still not solidified as inter-provincial travel currently has restrictions in place." Fortunately, short fields shouldn't pose a problem, and local horses shouldn't come up short at the end of their miles. "The horse population is quite healthy. The animals have had an extra month to prepare for live racing and the trainers have really been able to get their equine athletes in top condition."

The Maritime provinces' top track is popular with bettors every Old Home Week, when the Gold Cup and Saucer brings international attention to PEI. This year's edition of the race will go ahead, albeit without typical trackside crowds. "The Provincial Exhibition has announced that the Old Home Week activities that include the midway, horse shows, and agriculture displays have been cancelled for 2020, but this does not impact the harness racing events scheduled from August 13th to August 22nd including the Guardian Gold Cup and Saucer," said Walsh.

PEI will even play host to another marquee invitational this season: In a May 12 media release, Red Shores manager of marketing and brands Lee Drake stated that while the



Livestreaming of horses jogging and training has proved popular on the track's website.

Summerside Lobster Carnival has been cancelled, “this does not impact the harness racing events scheduled from July 5th to July 11th including the Governor’s Plate at Red Shores Summerside.”

For now, only essential personnel will be permitted to attend the qualifiers and pari-mutuel races.

“Red Shores is expecting to see our online viewership increase,” said Walsh. “We know there is a large appetite out there for people to see how the horses have prepared for the upcoming season, and really horsepeople from all over North America and beyond tune in.” He confirmed that their signal will again be available on Canada’s lone legal ADW site, Horseplayer Interactive, as well as “over 23” American ADWs, including TwinSpires, Xpressbet, Watch and Wager, and NYRA Bets.

The big question, at least before Woodbine Mohawk Park, Scioto Downs, Northfield Park, and Hoosier Park announced their reopening dates this week, was whether Red Shores Charlottetown might become “Fonner North”: a physically-small, high-attendance, moderate-handle operation suddenly thrust into the spotlight, like Nebraska’s Fonner Park thoroughbred track. Racing without on-track spectators, while implementing COVID-19 safety measures like face masks and physical distancing, Fonner Park achieved unexpected prominence and record-shattering handle increases because of its ability to keep racing through March into May, when major North American tracks (aside from Gulfstream Park) remained closed.

With a limited number of standardbred tracks confirmed for imminent race dates, it’s still likely Red Shores Charlottetown will gain new bettors and fans. New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Alberta, and all Ontario tracks have not yet resumed due to health precautions, and many have been hit hard by the loss of casino game revenues.

“The low rate of COVID here [in PEI] played a major role on our decision, and in particular the approval, to race,” said Walsh, adding that there have been no changes to purses at this time.

Handle has been growing at Red Shores Charlottetown – a 10 per cent increase in total 2019 over 2018 handle, with a 15 per cent increase in online-generated handle. Like Fonner Park, the Island track ordinarily benefits from significant food and beverage sales at its popular grandstand restaurants, and is now counting on its center-stage ADW presence to keep the local sport thriving through difficult times. Walsh said that the particulars on staying safe while racing will soon be made public: “Red Shores will be releasing a document Friday May 15th that will outline the new protocols that will be in place for people that will be participating on race days. We will have hand washing and hand sanitizing stations in place and social distancing will also be in place. Stay tuned for the full details.”

He agreed that even with limited attendance, the track’s all-time best handle could soon be surpassed by harness horseplayers seeking North American action.

“Yes, I believe that we should be able break this record,” he told HRU. “We have a very strong racing industry here in PEI and a professional Race Day Show. The PEI harness racing community and our equine athletes always put on a great show for our viewers.”

Incidentally, that record handle of \$391,031 (Cdn) was set on the night of the 2017 World Driving Championship final at Charlottetown, with bets coming in from across Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. With few rival venues competing for wagering dollars June 4, Red Shores *could* become Fonner North, if only for an equally unpredictable moment in time.

[View camera 1 at Red Shores here.](#)

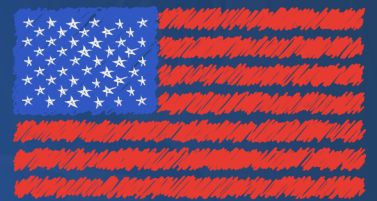
[View camera 2 at Red Shores here.](#)

[View a combined feed of camera 1 and 2 here.](#)

CLICK HERE
To Share This Story



RESULTS & REPLAYS



US & CANADIAN RESULTS/REPLAYS AVAILABLE IN EACH ONLINE EDITION

www.harnessracingupdate.com



Ali Carpenter – A girl and her shoes

by Victoria M. Howard

Some women love shoes, with some owning as many as 50 pairs at a time.

But a young woman from Guelph, ON surpasses most of them. She is surrounded by hundreds of shoes, just not designer brands such as Gucci, Christian Louboutin or Jimmy Choo. Ali Carpenter's shoe collection is predominantly made of steel. She is among the very few female farriers.

In a survey taken in 2014 by the American Farrier's Association, only six per cent of full-time farriers were women.

Starting a little later in life than other farriers, Carpenter decided to make a career of shoeing horses when she was 27.

Growing up around cow ponies on the family farm, her grandfather worked horses in the bush and her great-grandfather was a blacksmith.

"I always had the idea of being a farrier in the back of my mind but never believed I could or should do it, so I tried a million different things first. I have 2 diplomas and a Bachelor of Science—all in agriculture and equine sciences," Carpenter said.

"When I was a teenager I bought a horse with a crooked leg — probably one of the dumbest things you could do. When my horse went lame barefoot, the vet prescribed a pretty severe lateral extension: something simple, yet, something I had never heard of.

"After my blacksmith built a special shoe and I noticed a significant difference in my horse, a light bulb went off in my head that I wanted to be a farrier.

"I enrolled and attended Heartland Horseshoeing School in Lamar, Missouri, for eight weeks where I shod many horses. I return there periodically to continue my education when time permits, and also attend forging clinics. In fact, I



Courtesy Ali Carpenter

Farrier Ali Carpenter in action at Sunshine Meadows.

compete at forging and horseshoeing contests throughout Eastern Canada and the North Eastern United States."

Still considered "a man's job" by many, most trainers welcome a women farrier and treat them as equals.

"The only thing that matters to them is shoeing the horse properly. Yes, there are some who still believe it's an 'old boys' club' and treat me as if they're above me; or will hire a woman apprentice trying to prove a woman can't do it; but in general, as long as I get the job done properly, they're okay with it.

"In fact, there are women farriers who compete internationally and wipe the floor with their male competitors — proving women are definitely equal and capable.

"In my opinion the real problem is the clients — they are the ones that have more of a push back than fellow farriers.

"On the other hand, the race industry seems to have issues with females under horses because we are few and far between, for reasons I don't understand.

"In race barns I seem to get the most negative comments, and also where I get the most blatant sexual harassment. Shoeing horses is still viewed a man's profession and I'm often questioned incessantly as to why I would ever want to do it.

“The funny thing is that when I work with riding horses I don’t tend to get those comments – or if I do, it’s positive.

“I am very lucky to live in an area where there is a strong female presence with a group of over 40 female farriers in Ontario. We try to get together once or twice a year to hang out and socialize, and I’ve made many good friends with other female blacksmiths.”

Shoeing horses is not a glamorous job and very laborious. It requires holding a 1,000-pound animal – sometimes up to 20 plus horses a day – which can take its toll on your body.

“If you do it properly the horse holds their weight and you just have to deal with the weight of the hoof in your lap. The bending over is a strain on your back, but you can transfer the workload to your body and use your muscle groups to help save your body,” Carpenter said.

“Position is the key. As you get tired, you do tend to get sloppy and will fall back into your back. I work out regularly, which helps strengthen the supporting muscles, which in turn helps keep you from hurting yourself.

“Every day is a long day. Depending on the day, I may shoe six to eight hours a day – that’s not to say I haven’t been out shoeing past my bedtime.”

Wrestling with a 1,000-pound animal can be quite dangerous. Especially when you’re working with the youngsters.

“Yearlings are for sure the most difficult to shoe, for everything is new to them. They are used to living outside playing with their friends – running around and burning off their energy.

“Then they get tossed in a stall and have to learn how to be a horse. They don’t understand what we’re doing; the sensation is new, the way we ask them to stand is new, and they don’t know how to stand on three feet.

“You have to be in a good mental state to shoe the babies or else you’ll get hurt.

“And the job can be dangerous. One time, a piece of hot steel got in my eye and another time I was thrown 20 feet into the air.

“I’ve been bit, kicked, and stomped on – but horses that bite are the worst.

“Being a female blacksmith there are ways to get around the fact that I’m not a 250 lb. man. Instead of being macho, women learn ways of staying in control of a horse that requires less strength and convincing the horse to do it for us.

“For example, the hind limb of a horse has a reciprocal

apparatus. When one joint flexes – all the joints of the hind limb flex – and you use that to your advantage when trying to get a leg from a horse that won’t cooperate.

“Or if you hold the toe of a hoof flexed, you have control of that leg with very little effort on your behalf to keep the foot, and you don’t have to fight them.”

Being a farrier can be dangerous, it’s not as glamorous and respected as a trainer or driver and it takes its toll on your body. So why does Carpenter do it?

“I love what I do, enjoy working with these amazing creatures and wouldn’t trade it for anything in the world.”

CLICK HERE
To Share This Story



CLICK HERE
To send us
your feedback!



HARNESS RACING UPDATE

About Harness Racing Update

Harness Racing Update is owned by HRU Publications of Millwood, NY and will publish Fridays and Sundays from fall through late spring. HRU will add Saturday editions early summer through fall, publishing 3 days per week, and will add editions throughout the year as major news breaks.

Editor: Dave Briggs

Production: Brian Fuller

Graphic Design, Ads & Placement: Lisa Bihuniak

Advertising Sales: Wilma Van Vaerenbergh | [contact for ad sales/questions](#)

Results & Stats Editor: Lisa Duong

Founder: Bill Finley

Contributors: Claus Andersen, Garnet Barnsdale, Tim Bojarski, Jerry Connors, Frank Coto, The Curmudgeon, Paul Delean, Bill Finley, Joe FitzGerald, Dean Gillette, Ron Gurfein, Thomas Hedlund, Bill Heller, Bob Heyden, Dean Hoffman, Victoria Howard, Melissa Keith, Dave Landry, Lauren Lee, Dave Little, Chris Lomon, David Mattia, Trey Nosrac, Tom Pedulla, Andrea Pietrzak, James Platz, Bob Roberts, Sandra Snyder, Brett Sturman, Jay Wolf

Get in touch with HRU

PO Box 230 | Millwood, NY | 10546 | Telephone: (226) 374-9999

Editor/News Stories: editor@harnessracingupdate.com

Advertising: advertising@harnessracingupdate.com

Customer Service: customerservice@harnessracingupdate.com

Advertising info & rates:

If you are interested in advertising with us [please contact Wilma](#)



Timeline: Highlights from every decade in the last 100 years

by Bob Heyden

1930

Hanovers Bertha, the 1930 champ, is the second filly to win the Hambletonian... Babe Ruth attends the Kentucky Derby.... The Depression is now underway... Sonny Antonacci is born, would be voted into the Hall Of Fame in 1999.

1940

FIVE Hall Of Famers born — Jim Doherty, Herve Filion, John Cashman, Jr., Chuck Sylvester and Ron Gurfein.

1950

Proximity is the first female to be named Horse of the Year... Lusty Song takes the Hambletonian for Del Miller... Mike Lachance, Cat Manzi and Jim Simpson born.

1960

Adios Butler is named HOY and the following year he would repeat becoming the first to win it twice over the age of 3 both times (4 & 5)... Jimmy Takter and Per Eriksson both born in Sweden... Countess Adios takes both the Cane Pace and the Messenger, the LAST female to win either stake.

1970

A \$900 yearling takes the HOY title — Fresh Yankee at age 7. She would retire as the first \$1 million earner bred in North America (bred by Charlie Keller)... Timothy T wins the Hambletonian completing the first father/son combo to do so— John Simpson, Sr. and Jr... The first sophomore crop of Meadow Skipper yields Triple Crown winner Most Happy Fella.

1980

Niatross rewrites the record books, including winning the first ever million-dollar race... Peter Haughton is lost in an auto accident. Later that year his prized trotting colt Burgomeister went on to win the Hambletonian with brother Tommy second with Final Score.

1990

John Campbell becomes the first driver to win the Hambletonian three times in a four years stretch taking the 1990 edition with Harmonious... Artsplace wins as a 2YO in world record time 1:51.1 on the 5/8ths at Pompano... Del Miller drives in a race for a record eighth decade... Beach Towel becomes the first ever \$2 million single season earner... Two Triple Crown winners pass away in 1990 — Speedy Scot on June 15 and Ayres on Jan. 30.

2000

Gallo Blue Chip surges past \$2.4 million for a new single season record... Bettors Delight wraps up freshman honors with a victory in the Breeders Crown... Western Ideal becomes the first division winner to take EVERY one of his victories in 1:50 or faster... Goalfish takes the Yonkers Trot giving Jacqueline Ingrassia the one and only Triple Crown race win to a female driver... Moni Maker winds up her spectacular career with an under saddle record for Julie Krone and Jimmy Takter at the Red Mile.

2010

Rock N Roll Heaven is the easy choice for HOY, just like his sire was Rocknroll Hanover five years earlier... Muscle Massive wins the Hambletonian 13 years after Jimmy Takter first won it with Malabar Man in 1997... Put On A Show sets the all-time pacing filly earnings record at \$1,893,475.

Who said there's no baseball?

We've got a team of 33 Hambletonian starters through the years all with some kind of name baseball fans would like (alphabetically):

Action Factor 1987 8th
Americas Promise 9th in elim 2001
A Perfect Yankee 4th 2013 final
Approved Action 5th in elim 2000
Bon Sport 9th in 1985 elim
Brilliant Yankee 1978 OUT
Bronx 1926 YEAR ONE 12th and 10th
Brooklyn Hill 8th in 2016 elim
Center Field 9th 2003 elim
Dedicated Yankee 1992 7th in elim
Diamond Goal 7th elim 2001
Game Of Skill 4th elim 2002 (Rated #1 On Sam McKees Road To The Hambletonian that day for Schnittker)
Giant Hit 1995 THIRD
Giant Victory 1991 WINNER
Home Free 1955 11th
Little League 1982 87th elim
Legend Hanover 1979 WINNER
Mets Hall 2018 SECOND
Muscle Diamond 2015 7th elim
Muscles Yankee 1998 WINNER
Nevele Diamond 1974 SECOND
New York Yank 2005 9th elim
Opening Night 2011 THIRD
Play Action 6th 1983 in elim
Smokin Yankee 1981 5th and 8th
Star Perfect 1960 14th in elim
Strong Yankee 2005 4th final
Sutton THIRD 2016
Ways To Win 1975 last
Worth Seein 8th 9th 1962 (granddam of Peace Corps)
Yankee Glide 1997 last
Yankee King 1959 9th 8th
Yankee Peak 9th in 1983 elim

CLICK HERE
To Share This Story





HRU FOAL OF THE WEEK

Foal of the Week

Dave Landry

Foals don't start out with much more promise than this filly, the Sweet Lou—Great Memories full-sister to Warrawee Ubeaut. The foal was born recently at Dr. Mike Wilson's Warrawee Farm in Rockwood, ON. Warrawee Ubeaut, now 4, is a winner of \$1.6 million, sports a mark of 1:48.3 set as a rookie and was the Dan Patch winner in her division both at 2 and 3. Great Memories now has 11 foals and all nine racing-aged ones have raced. Apart from Warrawee Ubeaut, Great Memories also produced speedy E Dees Cam stallion Warrawee Needy, a winner of \$1.3 million that sports a mark of 1:46.4, along with Camluck gelding Warrawee Phoenix, who earned of \$100,000.

CLICK HERE

To Share This Story



**Harness Racing Update
on Facebook**

[▶ click here](#)



**Working Together for a strong
Horse Racing Industry in Ontario**

Three Breeds • One Vision





TWOS IN TRAINING



Mark Steacy in the HRU Twos in Training spotlight

Leading Ontario trainer Mark Steacy spoke to Jaimi MacDonald his most promising 2-year-olds, past greats such as 2006 Canadian Horse of the Year Majestic Son, working with the LandMark fractional stable, turning more of the stable operations over to his son and coping with COVID-19.

by Dave Briggs

HRU's Virtual Twos in Training series continued Saturday (May 16) featuring trainer **Mark Steacy** interviewed by **Jaimi MacDonald**.

Viewers interested in seeing the interview live can do so on the [HRU Facebook page](#) and our [YouTube page](#).

Thank you to [Winbak of Ontario](#) stallions for sponsoring that video.

Steacy, a three-time winner of the Johnston Cup as the leading trainer in the Ontario Sires Stakes program, spoke about his most promising 2-year-olds, past greats such as 2006 Canadian Horse of the Year Majestic Son, working with

the LandMark fractional stable, turning more of the stable operations over to his son and coping with COVID-19.

He also fielded some questions from viewers that commented live via Facebook and emailed HRU in advance of the show.

On Monday, May 18 at 7 p.m. EDT, **Heather Vitale** will interview trainer **Erv Miller**.

To date, HRU's 2020 Virtual Twos in Training videos – featuring **Marcus Melander, Carter Pinske, Ben Wallace, Ron Burke, Paul Kelley, Ray Schnittker, Casie Coleman, Tony Alagna, Noel Daley, Nancy Takter, Jim Campbell** and **Mark Steacy** – have garnered over 53,000 total views on Facebook and YouTube combined.

To make sure you don't miss a video, subscribe to HRU's YouTube page – for free – today.

CLICK HERE
To Share This Story



BREAKING STRIDE

with TREY NOSRAC

Hoofprints in Fog

Scene 7 (Coin Flip)

by Trey Nosrac

The setting is a room in an Alzheimer's ward. A young couple, Mandy and Ryan, continue to visit Martin Kilbane, an elderly horse trainer. In his lucid periods, Martin describes events in his life with remarkable clarity. In earlier sessions, he has talked about serving in the US cavalry, the death of his young wife, and his life-long struggle with alcohol.

[Scene 1](#) | [Scene 2](#) | [Scene 3](#) | [Scene 4](#) | [Scene 5](#) | [Scene 6](#)

SCENE 7

(Intro music)

(Hospital ambiance background, three gentle knocks on the door)

RYAN: Come on in.

MANDY: (footsteps) Hi, where is he?

RYAN: Fanny, the Haitian with dreadlocks, she took him to the barbershop. He should be back any minute.

MANDY: (sigh) What a job, taking care of crazy people.

RYAN: (sharp) He is not crazy, he's sick. Nobody wants to be here.

MANDY: I know, I know. It's just so frustrating, good days, bad, days... a treadmill to nowhere.

RYAN: He knew who I was today! He remembered Uncle Cecil.

(Soft knock and door opens)

FANNY: Mister Martin be in de end of de hall by de fish tank, he be ask if you sit a spell out dey.

MANDY: YES, yes. Please get me out of this room.

RYAN: I'll take his cigar box, don't forget to record him.

(footsteps) (muted background of bubbling fish tank will remain for this scene)

MANDY: (coyly) There he is, hello Martin. I've been waiting to talk to you. You were about to tell me how you got Heaven's Rein, but you feel asleep.

MARTIN: I did? When?

MANDY: Yesterday. You told us that you got the horse from the guy with the funny name...Ewell?

MARTIN: Euley, Euley K. Dobbs,

MANDY: Yes, yes, from the AA meetings, for staying sober.

MARTIN: (Slightly irritated) How do you know about that? Those meetings are private.

MANDY: You told...um...Oh, I don't care about any old meetings, I just want to know about the horse. Did you get her when she was a baby?

MARTIN: She was a yearling, that means she was one-year-old. She got culled from the pack of Euley's horses going to sale.

RYAN: Culled?

MARTIN: A few babies from a farm might be too small, or they might stand crooked. They are rejects. Euley kept the cream of his crop for racing, culled a couple, and then sold the rest. In '55, he culled two of them, both were well-bred, but one had a big old knot the size of a coconut on the top of her back knee, the other filly toed-in. Those were the two horses that Ted and me had dangling on the line if we didn't fall off the wagon for six months.

MANDY: And you both made it.

MARTIN: Yes ma'am, we made the meetings. It weren't easy. We leaned on each other... but we got our sobriety coins, mine is inside this box. (sound of shaking box). This is it, right here.

RYAN: How did you choose?

MARTIN: (chuckles) Flipped this coin, both of us wanted the filly who toed in, neither one of us liked the looks of that knee. Ted won, he took the toed-in filly and walked off with her as happy as a clam.

MANDY: I guess it's true, life can be a coin toss.

MARTIN: Yes ma'am...And this is the damndest thing, but I



Listen to this story here



swear it's true. For some reason, I don't know why, that filly looked me square in the eye, pawed at the ground three times, and at that moment, I knew, I KNEW, she was gonna be something special.

MANDY: And she was?

MARTIN: Well, this ain't no fairy tale missy, and it ain't a big mystery. It took years and plenty of work, like it always does to get a baby horse onto the racetrack. They all need time to grow up and learn lessons.

RYAN: Let me get this straight, Euley, the man who steered you to AA, gave you this horse, no strings attached.

MARTIN: No strings. Euley giving away two of his horses may sound unusual, and it was a nice thing to do, but it wasn't a million dollars.

RYAN: And he never asked for a dime when she won money racing.

MARTIN: Nope, he didn't need any dimes from me. He probably had a million dollars back when a million dollars was real money. If you think about it, he was giving me a horse that he didn't want, a horse that nobody wanted. And Heaven wasn't completely free, Euley took feed money from my paycheck, and when I worked with the filly, it always had to be after my workday when everyone else was off the track.

MANDY: What about her bad knee.

MARTIN: That big knee was gone in a few weeks. It went down like air out of a carnival balloon. That happens sometimes. Maybe she got kicked in the field by another baby, maybe it was an infection, but whatever it was, the swelling went away. Of course, other problems poked their head up from time to time, they always do with racehorses, but that knee was fine til the day Heaven died.

RYAN: Problems?

MARTIN: Time problems. You see, every single racehorse turns two when the clock strikes twelve on New Year's Eve. It doesn't matter the real day of their birth, every horse born that year is two years old on January 1.

RYAN: That's a strange idea.

MARTIN: It's for racing reasons that they mess with the birthdays like that. In the summertime, when they are two, if they can get around a racetrack fast enough, they can race for money against all the others that are two. Heaven wasn't in a hurry to be a racehorse. I couldn't get her to beat a plowhorse when she was two. She wasn't even ready in the early summer when she turned three. It wasn't until Jun 23, 1958, that she got to racing...but, my oh my, when she got the hang of things, that filly could fly.

MANDY: Fly to fame and riches.

MARTIN: (Sighs) No ma'am, Heaven flew into storms, terrible storms.

MANDY: Storms?

(footsteps)

FANNY: I hates to break up dis party but Mister Martin, it be time for me to roll ya to therapy.

MANDY: Martin, tomorrow I want you to tell me about those storms.

MARTIN: I'll do my best.

(Fade music)

CLICK HERE
To Share This Story



HRU EDITIONS FROM THE PAST



**Previous HRU editions are available any
time for FREE on the HRU website**

www.harnessracingupdate.com/archives

HOME SUBSCRIBE PAST EDITIONS ADVERTISING ABOUT US

January							February						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
29	30	31					26	27	28				

March							April						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
			1	2	3	4	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
26	27	28	29	30	31		30						



Listen to this story here



HRU NEWS



News in harness
racing, notes and
announcements

www.harnessracingupdate.com



Dave Briggs

Tattersalls auctioneer Cris Caldwell has died at age 63.

Tattersalls auctioneer Cris Caldwell dead at 63

Alan Carasso of *Thoroughbred Daily News* reported Saturday ([full story here](#)) that long-time Tattersalls auctioneer Cris Caldwell has died at the age of 63.

"We are saddened to hear of the news of Cris' passing," said Tattersalls manager David Reid. "Cris was an exceptional auctioneer with a unique style and was great to work with. He has been the lead auctioneer for Tattersalls for 20 years and played an important role in the success of the sale company. He will be missed."

Caldwell followed his late father Tom Caldwell into the auctioneering business. Both father and son died of pancreatic cancer.

Cris was born to Mary and Tom Caldwell in Upland, CA, on Valentine's Day 1957 and began his auction career at age 16 with the Maclin Caldwell Auction Company in Chino, CA, "selling everything from furniture to horses" five days a week. According to an obituary, Caldwell was passionate about ranching and the Western way of life. He managed to instill those passions into his two daughters Alden and Laurel, who continue his legacy as a fourth-generation rancher and budding veterinarian, respectively.

The obituary describes Caldwell as an "avid athlete and daredevil," his life "full of notorious hunting, skiing and road cycling stories."

In addition to his mother, brother and daughters, Cris Caldwell is survived by two sisters, Georgeanna and Karen, and several cousins, nieces and nephews. Funeral details have not been released.

— *Thoroughbred Daily News*

2020 Harness Racing Hall of Fame dinner cancelled

Due to the uncertainty surrounding the re-opening of New York State, and with continuing concerns regarding COVID-19 and large gatherings, the Board of Trustees of the Harness Racing Museum & Hall of Fame has made the unprecedented decision to cancel the 2020 Harness Racing Hall of Fame induction dinner and ceremonies in Goshen, NY.

Harness Racing Hall of Fame honorees, including Hall of Famers **Tom Charters**, **Jeff Gural**, **Bill Popfinger** and **Tim Tetrick**, and Communicators **Phil Pikelnny** and **Ken Weingartner**, scheduled for induction on Sunday, July 5, 2020, will instead be officially inducted at the July 2021 event. Also being honored at the 2021 event will be the newest members of the Living Horse Hall of Fame: **Always B Miki**, **Bee A Magician** and **Sweet Lou**, and broodmares **Danae** and **Precious Beauty**. **Roy Davis** and **Arlene Siegel** will be inducted into the Hall of the Immortals and **Steve Oldford**, the 2020 Museum Amateur Driving Champion, will be recognized for the 7th time.

The 2020 Museum Board of Trustees Annual Meeting will be held by video or telephone conferencing on or about July 5, 2020.

— *Harness Racing Museum and Hall of Fame*

Crawford Farms' partner company assisting equine industry in obtaining SBA relief funding

Crawford Farms is pleased to announce its partner company Fund-Ex Solutions Group (FSG) is assisting the equine industry in securing funds through the Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) as part of the CARES Act.

"If you're a small business owner or independent contractor, our partner company is here to help you access the SBA's highly sought-after PPP relief loan," said Crawford Farms owner Michelle Crawford. "We want the industry to know that this financial resource is available to help those who need to keep themselves and their employees on payroll."

FSG is a certified non-bank SBA lender that's participating in the government-backed PPP. The program was created to provide working capital to small businesses, independent contractors, sole proprietors, and the self-employed impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in order to cover ongoing expenses for payroll; a portion of the funds may also be applied to paying rent, mortgage interest, and utilities. The SBA will forgive loans as long as borrowers use the funds according to the guidelines.

For more information, visit crawfordfarms.bhgchoice.com.

— *Crawford Farms*

Feedback!

Sponsored by

PREFERRED EQUINE

preferredequine.com

ALL NEW, SUPER SNAZZY.
CLICK FOR A TEST DRIVE.

PREFERREDEQUINE.COM | (914) 773-7777

Thoughts on Gurfein's plan to have a committee determine a Commissioner

I have a comment about Ron Gurfein's suggestion that a committee be appointed to come up with a plan for designating a National Commissioner of Racing ([full story here](#)). I do not oppose the idea in concept, although I also believe that because of the territorial attitudes of the various racing commissions, such an effort is highly unlikely to succeed.

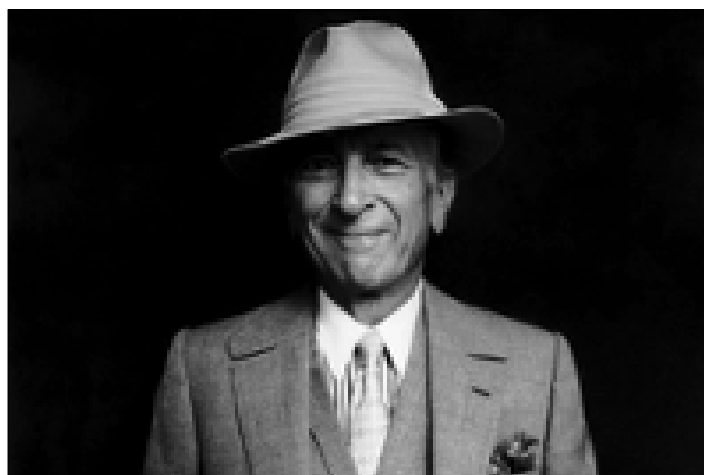
My immediate quibble is with the tentative roster for the committee that Ron suggested. It is certainly true that all five of Gurfein's suggestions are eminent and qualified. The problem is that because they consist of four trainer/drivers and one racetrack operator, they represent a relatively small segment of the harness racing industry. Where is the representation for owners and breeders, for example? The inclusion of a state or provincial regulator who is known to support the idea would also give it greater credibility. Populating the committee in that manner is not only fair, it would enhance the possibilities of success for an exercise that is questionable at best.

—Steve McCoy / USTA director

Letter to Trey Nosrac from legendary writer Gay Talese

Dear Trey Nosrac,

It was surprising, and also flattering, to be mentioned in your May 10th article in Harness Racing Update ([full story here](#)) — recalling a piece I'd written for *The New York Times* back in 1958. I was 26 then. I'm 88 now. Then I was in the sports department of *The Times*; now I'm completing my 15th book, and — if the virus and economy allows — it should be printed early in the coming year.



Gay Talese.

As a young sportswriter in the late 1950s, I rarely wrote about harness racing, and so it was gratifying to see your reprint. I'm still amazed that somebody dug it up.

—Gay Talese

CLICK HERE
To Share This Story



Standardbred Retirement Foundation

Since 1989



SRF is Different

- Is the most productive charity of it's kind.
- Private donations are paramount, and the primary source of support.
- Caring for more than 400 trotters and pacers.

Breeding Donations Appreciated

STANDARD BRED
Rescue



Gifts are tax-deductible

AdoptaHorse.org

42 Arneytown-Hornerstown Rd.
Cream Ridge, NJ 08514
(609) 738-3255 • SRFHorsesandKids@gmail.com