



THE ART OF SIMPLICITY KEY TO KILDARAGH'S SUCCESS



Peter Kavanagh | Tattersalls

By Emma Berry

"Their welfare was our livelihood." Peter Kavanagh could easily be talking about the mares and foals out in the paddocks at Kildaragh Stud. In fact he is casting his mind back to childhood days on his family's cattle farm.

Though racing and breeding are increasingly observed through the prism of the data supplied by technology, a back-to-basics approach would stand any aspiring breeder in good stead, as would an hour spent listening to Kavanagh.

There's a touch of the John Cleese about him: long legs which could easily propel him straight into Monty Python's Ministry of Silly Walks sketch, and an uproarious sense of humour to boot. But don't let that lupine grin fool you into thinking that Kavanagh doesn't take this business very seriously indeed.

"I think that gave me an appreciation of stock and an appraisal of stock," he continues. "That's where a lot of the basics stem from. That you can care for them, and you're all the time working in close association with them and their needs. My father was a cattle dealer predominantly, so a lot of stock used to come out to the farm and then every three weeks or month he'd sell them off. We would end up driving them on the roads for 10 miles on occasions, either supplying to farms or racecourses at the time. So you had your chores to do before school and when you came home in the evenings, cattle to be fed."

No silver spoon, then, but an ingrained work ethic which would prepare him for a lifetime of work with similar discipline once his attention switched from bovine to equine.

"Work was sort of second nature," he says. "My father didn't call it work, just what was to be done. We didn't question it. I was always keen on horses. He didn't particularly like horses but I couldn't live without them. There was a couple of people who kept horses around and about, so I used to go to visit those, break them with some of the people and just get to know and be around horses. And then my father reluctantly allowed me to have a pony, on one condition that I could herd the cattle in the summer. I put a trap behind and fed them in the winter. So he was happy and I was happy."

There were no broodmares at the family farm, but Kavanagh eventually found himself on the Irish National Stud course. An early job in the local quarry had focused his mind on the fact he really must pursue his dream of working with horses. [Cont. p3](#)

IN TDN AMERICA TODAY

'24 VALUE SIRES - PART 2: STALLIONS UNDER \$10K

Chris McGrath takes a look at next year's Kentucky-based sire roster priced under \$10,000.

“I remember him vividly as a yearling... a most unbelievable physical and obviously what he did on the racetrack was phenomenal. I'm a huge fan of the Scat Daddy line” Alex Elliott



LITTLE BIG BEAR

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Tuesday, December 19, 2023



'Swift as a bird I flew down many a course.' So begins Paul Mellon's ode to Mill Reef, who retired to the National Stud after being European Horse of the Year in 1971 and Champion Older Horse in England in 1972. It was his Gimcrack Stakes victory of 1970 that inspired his owner-breeder's poem, which Mellon recited as part of his Gimcrack speech. The poem is inscribed on the plinth of Mill Reef's statue at the stud. | Emma Berry

HRI ANNOUNCED BUDGET FOR 2024

6

Horse Racing Ireland's newly-released budget will include an increase in prize money in addition to added support for integrity and equine welfare.

HALF TO BARNEY ROY DEBUTS AT WOLVERHAMPTON

8

Godolphin's Arabian Tribe (Dubawi), a Tattersalls October Book 1 graduate, gets his start at Wolverhampton Tuesday.

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From his studies he went on to work at Moyglare Stud followed by the sales in Deauville.

"I always wanted to learn French. I originally went to France for six months. I was supposed to do three months in Logis when it was owned by the Bozos, and three months at Mézeray, but I ended up staying three and a half years," he says.

"I just love France and it's been very good to me subsequently because of my contacts there. We sent fillies to be trained in France. With Richard Gibson in particular we had great success. There were a lot of owner-breeders there and I'd say French racing back then was the best in the world. The Bunker Hunt era, the Boussac era. There were a lot of owner-breeders which have since dwindled down to very few. The Wildensteins were a very big operation then, and the Wertheimers. They had beautiful farms and great tradition, and unfortunately we're losing that very quickly. There seems to be a dispersal every year with nobody really coming in



Alice, Peter, Roderic and Sophie Kavanagh | Emma Berry

on a serious level to take their place."

The modern move away from the traditional owner-breeder operations to those driven with a more commercial bent has brought a vastly altered complexion to thoroughbred breeding, which is now very much an industry. There is a necessity to this, up to a point, and change must be accepted, if not embraced, but it is an adjustment which has taken its toll on the sport.

"The sales ring has become nearly more important than the racecourse and people mate their mares nearly accordingly, which is wrong too," says Kavanagh.

"The main focus is trading. That's fine. But back in the day, the sales ring was only for disposing of excess horses, whereas now it's become a total way of life. Finding people to race the horses now is becoming more and more difficult. Individuals seem to be becoming more and more rare."

3 first-crop 2YO Group winners bettering the start of his own sire KINGMAN

- PERSIAN DREAMER** Duchess of Cambridge Stakes-Gr.2
- CLASSIC FLOWER** Criterium de Maisons Laffitte-Gr.2
- ZONA VERDE** Jimmy Durante Stakes-Gr.3

Also sire of Dewhurst Stakes-Gr.1 third EBEN SHADDAD and Norfolk Stakes-Gr.2 runner-up MALC

100% record in North America

4 winners from 4 runners including 2 stakes horses and a recent first-time-out winner at Gulfstream Park for Wesley Ward...

IMABOUTAGO set the early pace, cruised through the turn under confident handling, and kicked away from any challenges the closers could muster to win by 2½ lengths TDN, 9/12/23

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Fee: €12,500

Cont.

He continues, "Every year you look at the Derby field, at least a third of them don't stay, same with the Oaks. Whereas the great owner-breeders bred horses specifically for those races. Now it's almost by accident a horse ends up in the Derby. And you see the three very good horses [Adayar, Hukum and Westover] being exported to Japan, and Pyledriver becoming a National Hunt stallion without having a chance on the Flat. That wouldn't have happened before.

"You don't know where these horses are going to come from, these good stallions. Into Mischief, they couldn't raffle him initially when he went to stud. Every time they did a big promotion on him, people nearly went into reverse. But he had to do it the hard way and now he's an exceptional stallion. And there have been cases in point all through the years, and horses like this can get passed over very easily if you don't get some sort of an opportunity.

"I think we need to be a little more long sighted with regard to the future."

Kavanagh's own education was honed working at Kildangan Stud in the days of its founder, the trainer and breeder Roderic More O'Ferrall, who sold the Co Kildare farm to Sheikh Mohammed in 1986.

The mares owned by Gerry Oldham of Citadel Stud had been based there and were eventually split between nearby Kildaragh Stud, which was bought by Kavanagh and his wife Antoinette in 1984, and Knocktoran Stud. The example set by those two Classic-winning breeders made a deep impression.

"We bought into and picked up some of the Citadel mares along the way," says Kavanagh. "I suppose when you've worked with families for 20, 30 years, you get a bit of a feeling for them and you tend to realise what suits them best. And you're more passionate about them because you've been with them for so long. Mr Oldham was a remarkable man and he was very keen on his racing. He was a very easy man to work with and he had enormous success from a very selective broodmare band."

Top of that hill of success was Oldham's treble Gold Cup winner Sagaro (Ire), with 2,000 Guineas winner Zino (GB), Irish Derby-winning half-brothers Talgo (Ire) and Fidalgo (Ire), and St Leger winner Intermezzo (GB) being the key members of a significant supporting cast.

The Kavanaghs benefited themselves from their investment in some of Oldham's lines through their purchase of Malaspina (Ire) (Whipper), later the dam of G3 Nell Gwyn S. winner Daban (Ire) (Acclamation {GB}), and Zivania (Ire) (Shernazar {GB}), who produced seven black-type horses including the 1,000 Guineas third Hathrah (Ire) (Linamix {Fr}).




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Her line has been continued successfully by Shadwell, who bred from her the Listed winner Hadaatha (Ire) ([Sea the Stars {Ire}](#)), who is perhaps now better known as the dam of this season's G1 Nassau S. winner Al Husn (Ire) (Dubawi {Ire}).

"He had no interest in the sales ring, just the racetrack," says Kavanagh of Oldham. "That was always interesting, and Mr More O'Ferrall was equally interested in producing horses to run. In the eight years we were at Kildangan, from '78 to '86, we bred three Classic winners there with relatively old mares. It was a remarkable farm.

"It's only when you reflect back that you realise what we have lost. Someone like Gerald Leigh. Some of those families will have vanished forever."

A family which is unlikely to disappear from the scene anytime soon is Kavanagh's own. His and Antoinette's three children Roderic, Alice and Sophie are all very much involved in different aspects of

the business, with the former having been one of the breeze-up consignors behind this year's star juvenile Vandeeck (GB) (Havana Grey {GB}), who was sold through his Glending Stables.

"They're all equally passionate," says their father. "There's two at home on the farm full time. Alice looks after the broodmares and she does her own foal consigning with AK Thoroughbreds, and that dovetails into the activities on the farm. And Roderic has his breeze-up horses. He was fortunate to pick up Vandeeck and he's turned out to be a champion. Those sort of things just bring the whole game to another level."

He continues, "We actually sent them away to school just to show them there was another life out there. Every time they were always late going back because they were watching a mare that was about to foal, or there was something else.

"That sort of energy, it's needed to keep an operation going. It's a bit of a relay race, really. There needs to be somebody there to take up the slack and carry it on."

With his unconventional, though arguably more valuable, education having been started at home on the farm, just as his children's was, Kavanagh is well positioned to be able to offer a few pointers to those coming through, eager to learn.

"I think you just have to gravitate towards clever people and people that are well-informed and you've got to be a good listener, just keeping your head down and focusing on what needs to be done," he says of the business he still finds as

enjoyable as it has been rewarding.

"In particular, I love just seeing the foals. There's always that element of magic to it. You can never take things for granted. I do most of the feeding of the yearlings and the weanlings and just seeing them on a daily basis and how they develop, I think that gives great satisfaction. And then I suppose the ultimate satisfaction is when you produce a good racehorse."



Peter, Antoinette and Roderic Kavanagh at the sales
Tattersalls

He continues, "You don't hear stockmanship mentioned too often now, but good people that breed any animal, they're passionate about it and they spend a lot of time at it. They're not doing it remotely. Animals need careful attention nearly 24/7.

"One of my passions is land and pasture. We graze a lot of cattle on the farm. We run sheep on it in the winter. We're just trying to create the most favourable possible environment to raise stock on, and that's a passion in itself, just maintaining it.

Paddocks can either be overgrazed or undergrazed, so they've got to be appraised on a weekly basis, really. You don't just turn the horses out there and look over the gate every two or three weeks. If you get the land right, you can see it in your horses. You just see. The product becomes what you want it to be: good-boned horses, healthy coats, good feet. And one without the other, it just won't work."

There is no doubt that technology in varying forms has made our lives easier in some respects, but when it comes to rearing racehorses, Kavanagh holds on to the belief that the cleverest approach is also the simplest. It is bearing fruit, because on his farm's well tended acres have been raised the Group 1 winners G Force (Ire), Jukebox Jury (Ire), Frozen Fire (Ger) and Glencadam Gold (Ire) to name but a handful of the stakes horses to have graduated from Kildaragh.

He adds, "The biggest part of our game as a breeder, as a producer of stock, is observation. It's not technology. It's not rocket science. You watch how the horses move towards you at feeding time, whether they're outside or inside. Then you watch how they eat and how they interact with the others. And then when you've finished everything, you walk backwards towards the gate still observing.

"It's about keeping everything simple and practical, and learning to see what works best for the horse."

EUROPEAN NEWS

INTEGRITY AND WELFARE FUNDING INCREASES IN HRI'S BUDGET FOR 2024



Suzanne Eade | *Racingfotos.com*

Horse Racing Ireland boss Suzanne Eade says the industry is facing into a period of uncertainty in relation to gambling regulation and described integrity and equine welfare as "crucial areas" for investment in announcing the budget for 2024. Prize-money is an area that HRI have concentrated on and will be increased by €1.3m to €69.4m while a record 395 fixtures will be staged. However, while owners have "a record number of opportunities" to look forward to with their horses in 2024, administration fees are set to rise.

Eade said, "The value of the Irish Horse Racing and Breeding Industry was measured in 2023 and amounts to €2.5bn, an increase of over 30% since 2016, despite some challenging times in the intervening period. In framing the industry budget for 2024, Horse Racing Ireland wants to create the environment for that contribution to the economy to grow again.

"Deloitte's research found that the industry fuels in excess of €500m of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) every year and we know that prize money remains the most significant lever in attracting investment into Irish racing. This FDI contributes heavily to rural economies all over Ireland, and so in increasing the fixture list to 395 fixtures in 2024, we do so by increasing the prize money fund to €69.4m and maintaining current race values.

"This budget for 2024 sees increases in the crucial areas of integrity and equine welfare; following the launch of HRI's Sustainability Strategy, it provides for an initial sustainability

scheme for racecourses; and it ringfences support for one of the greatest challenges our industry faces: the recruitment and retention of industry staff."

Integrity funding is set to increase to €17.3m (+7%) as HRI continues to invest in all aspects of Integrity (IHRB, point-to-points, as well as racecourse operational integrity needs). This figure, which includes €0.8m in business-critical IT capital funding to the IHRB, has increased from €16.1m in Budget 2023 and has grown from €12.4m in 2020.

The 2024 Budget provides for investment in equine welfare activities and welfare related grant funding of €3.5m, an increase of €0.8m on Budget 2023. The HRI Equine Welfare focus continues to be on Standards, Traceability, Safety Nets and Education.

On-going support of Treo Eile and the Irish Horse Welfare Trust will help to promote the versatility of thoroughbreds for alternative careers. 2024 activities also include phase two of the Equine Injury Risk Reduction (EIRR) project--actions to mitigate risk, continued monitoring and reporting including publication; the introduction of a Welfare Standards Assessment online learning course tailored for Irish Industry participants; and delivery of an Equine Welfare Conference in May 2024. HRI will also continue to support the IHRB with respect to their ongoing welfare activity.

Eade continued, "The IRE Incentive Scheme for breeders will continue in 2024 in recognition of the difficult market conditions at many sales in 2023, and HRI has extended its support for the Point-to-Point sector to include insurance specific grants in 2024.

"2024 will also be an important year for racecourses being the first year of the new media rights deal which will underpin their financial security for the next five years, against a backdrop of uncertainty with respect to gambling regulation. HRI will continue its significant investment in upgrading racecourse facilities with the short-term focus on improving industry infrastructure, while our Marketing team will continue to support racecourses' promotional activities with campaigns to grow interest in our sport and drive fan engagement and increase race day attendances."

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VOTING OPENED FOR RETRAINING OF RACEHORSES AWARDS



Voting closes on Jan. 19 | RoR

Retraining of Racehorses [RoR] has unveiled the finalists for the inaugural Sir Peter O'Sullivan Charitable Trust RoR Community Impact Award and the prestigious The Jockey Club RoR Horse of the Year Award.

The public will determine the winner of each award through voting for their favourites via www.ror-events.org.uk. Having received over 200 nominations from across the racing and equestrian worlds, RoR announced a shortlist of 12 horses for each award in November.

An independent RoR Judging panel then had the challenge of narrowing down the final three finalists for each award. The new Sir Peter O'Sullivan Charitable Trust RoR Community Impact Award aims to recognise any individual, former racehorse partnership, or organisation that has significantly impacted people's lives with a former racehorse.

Introduced in 2014, The Jockey Club RoR Horse of the Year Award was open to all RoR registered former racehorses who have successfully transitioned from racing to a new career.

Voting officially opened on Dec. 18 and closes at 5pm on Jan. 19, 2024.

David Catlow, RoR Managing Director, said, "We are thrilled to open the voting for both these awards. The exceptional nominations from across the UK made our job and the judges' decision incredibly difficult. All the stories shared highlight not only the adaptability of a former racehorse to a wide range of second careers but also the remarkable commitment to the horses' well-being of so many involved in aftercare."

All six finalists will attend the RoR Awards evening at The Jockey Club Rooms on Jan. 31, 2024, where the ultimate winners as voted by the public will be revealed. The evening also features presentations to this season's RoR Elite Champions in dressage, eventing, polo, endurance, showing and hunting.

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FIRST-SEASON SIRE WITH RUNNERS

Tuesday, Dec. 19, 2023:

UNITED KINGDOM

Inns of Court (Ire) (Invincible Spirit {Ire}), Tally-Ho Stud
169 foals of racing age
17:30-WOLVERHAMPTON, 8.75f, I Am The Fox (Ire)
9,500gns RNA Tattersalls Online June Sale 2023

FRANCE

Fas (Ire) (Fastnet Rock {Aus}), Haras de Saint-Vincent
30 foals of racing age
3-PAU, 1600m, Gee Whizzer (Fr)
9,500gns RNA Arqana December Breeding Stock Sale 2021 - English Version; €5,000 Osarus September Yearling Sale 2022

FOR THE RETRAINING AND WELFARE OF RACEHORSES

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OBSERVATIONS

on the European racing scene

HALF-BROTHER TO MG1SW BARNEY ROY IN LINE FOR WOLVERHAMPTON DEBUT

17.30 Wolverhampton, Mdn, £9,950, 2yo, 8f 142y (AWT)
 Godolphin's hitherto unraced **ARABIAN TRIBE (GB) (Dubawi {Ire})** is a 750,000gns Tattersalls October Book 1 half-brother to four-time Group 1 winner Barney Roy (GB) (Excelebration {Ire}) and he encounters nine in this debut. Opposition to the Charlie Appleby trainee includes Rabbah Racing's fellow newcomer **Ghostlore (Ire) (Frankel {GB})**, who is a €260,000 Arqana October half-brother to G2 Celebration Mile victor Duke Of Hazzard (Fr) (Lope De Vega {Ire}) out of a half-sister to G1 Racing Post Trophy hero Palace Episode (Machiavellian), from the Simon & Ed Crisford stable.

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Barney Roy | DRC

BRITAIN

Monday's Results:

2nd-Wolverhampton, £6,600, Mdn, 12-18, 2yo, 7f 36y (AWT), 1:29.74, st.

ROYAL VELVET (GB) (f, 2, Lightning Spear {GB}--Velvet Morn {Ire}, by Epaulette {Aus}), who posted a Dec. 6 debut sixth over this trip at Kempton last time, chased the leaders in a midfield seventh after the initial strides here.

Coming under pressure at the top of the straight, the 12-1 chance went fifth entering the final furlong and kept on strongly to deny Handsome Chap (Ire) (Camacho {GB}) by 3/4-of-a-length nearing the line, becoming the 11th winner for her freshman sire (by Pivotal {GB}). Royal Velvet is the first of two foals produced by a dual-winning granddaughter of Listed Round Tower S. victrix Lady Of Kildare (Ire) (Mujadil), herself out of G3 Royal Whip S. winner Dancing Sunset (Ire) (Red Sunset {Ire}). The March-foaled bay is half to a yearling colt by Time Test (GB). Lifetime Record: 2-1-0-0, \$4,522. O/B-Mrs Susie Hartley (GB); T-William Knight.

ADDITIONAL MAIDEN WINNERS:

Composite (GB), g, 3, Cracksman (GB)--Photographic (GB), by **Oasis Dream (GB)**. Wolverhampton, 12-18, 12f 51y (AWT), 2:39.23. Lifetime Record: 3-1-0-1, \$6,733. B-Juddmonte Farms Ltd (GB). *5,000gns 3yo '23 TATHRA. **1/2 to Shutter Speed (GB) (Dansili {GB}), GSW-Eng, \$172,930.

FRANCE

CONDITIONS RESULTS:

6th-Lyon La Soie, €27,000, Cond, 12-18, 2yo, 9f (AWT), 1:54.80, st.

ZELMAN (FR) (g, 2, Zelzal {Fr}--Kitkarma {Fr}, by Turtle Bowl {Ire}) Lifetime Record: 4-3-0-1, €37,100. O-Anne-Sophie Allard, Daniel Allard, Jacques Bisson, Jeannot Andt & Mlle Elodie Douard; B-Alain Prudent, Mme Elisa Prudent & Alexandre Prudent (FR); T-Anne-Sophie & Daniel Allard. *€16,000 Ylg '22 ARQOCT.

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Highlights Include:

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Victoria Signs 20-Year Wagering Deal With Tabcorp

Hong Kong Offers Rejected For Astapor

VALUE SIRES FOR 2024 PART II: STALLIONS UNDER \$10,000



Highly Motivated | Sarah Andrew

by Chris McGrath

Having dealt with the new sires as a case apart, today we start our journey through the price bands of Kentucky stallions by seeing what we can do with a four-figure budget.

Even at this end of the market, the perennial dilemma remains that value means different things to different people. A breeder operating at this level tends to appreciate every cent of a commercial return, however marginal. If your belt is already at the last notch, then the understandable inclination is to leave any selfless consideration of the breed's wider interests to those who can better afford it.

Cont., p3

GAMING COMMISSION WILL NOT ALLOW APPEALS IN GREAT WHITE WAY STAKES

by Bill Finley

Whether or not the stewards made the right or wrong calls when disqualifying **Brick Ambush** (Laoban) and not disqualifying **Antonio of Venice** (Laoban) in the \$500,000 Great White Way Division of the New York Stallion Series run Saturday at Aqueduct is something the New York State Gaming Commission is not going to lose any sleep over.

Two owners reached out to the Gaming Commission to file an appeal of the stewards' rulings on the race. The first came from Dean Reeves, whose **Brick Ambush** was disqualified from second and placed last. The disqualification cost the owner \$100,000 in purse money. Thomas Albrecht, the managing partner of the group that owns **The Big Torpedo** (Big Brown) also sought an appeal, asking that the race winner **Antonio of Venice** be disqualified for interference. The **Big Torpedo** crossed the wire fourth, but was placed third because of the disqualification of **Brick Ambush**. That raised the possibility that if **Antonio of Venice** was not disqualified and **Brick Ambush** was restored as the official second-place finisher then **Big Torpedo** would be dropped back to fourth, which would have cost his owners \$30,000.

On Tuesday, the Gaming Commission reached out to both owners and essentially ended any hopes they may have had that the order of finish would be changed after their appeals were heard and the stewards were forced to explain a decision for which there doesn't appear to be an explanation. **Cont., p9**

IN TDN EUROPE TODAY

SIMPLICITY KEY TO KILDARAGH'S SUCCESS

Emma Berry catches up with top breeder Peter Kavanagh, who has launched a dynasty of his own at Kildaragh Stud.



G1 Champagne S., G1 Woody Stephens S. (by 10 lengths)
and G1 H. Allen Jerkens S. winner by **MUNNINGS**

JACK CHRISTOPHER



"I've never had a dirt horse with this much
pure brilliance" TRAINER CHAD BROWN

FIRST-CROP 2YOs ARE
MAKING

NOISE

LEADING THE INTO MISCHIEF SIRE LINE BY
% OF BLACK TYPE PERFORMERS IN 2023:

STALLION	% BTHS
AUDIBLE	12.9%
INTO MISCHIEF	11.5%
PRACTICAL JOKE	9.8%
MAXIMUS MISCHIEF	7.9%
GOLDENCENTS	6.6%

STANDING IN KY | SOURCE: BHD 12-18-2023



INTO MISCHIEF - BLUE DEVIL BEL
BY GILDED TIME
2024 FEE: \$15,000

AUDIBLE

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Tuesday, December 19, 2023



2023 in photos: July 12. Junior Alvarado visits with Cody's Wish (Curlin) at Saratoga after the Godolphin homebred galloped with exercise rider Eddie Davis up. | Sarah Andrew

KEENELAND 2024 SPRING STAKES SCHEDULE 10

Keeneland released their stakes schedule for their 2024 Spring meeting, which will showcase 19 stakes races and the 100th running of the GI Toyota Blue Grass.

THE MOST-READ TDN STORIES OF 2023 10

The TDN recaps which stories resonated most with our readers after a year that was anything but quiet.

HORSESHOE INDIANAPOLIS MAKES HVAF DONATION 12

Vice President and GM of Horseshoe Indianapolis Eric Halstrom presented the Hoosier Veterans and Families Inc. of Indiana with a check donation of \$4,430.15.

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Value Sires, Part 2 *(cont. from p1)*

Nonetheless I would persist in the view that anyone who believes in a mare can do her no better service than try to put a winner on the page.

Many stallions in this bracket are barely clinging to a place in the Bluegrass, even though in many cases they have had little or no opportunity to show what their mature stock can do on the racetrack. We know that the commercial compulsion towards new sires is double-edged, in that they are abandoned just as promptly as they were embraced only a year previously. And once a sire is reckless enough actually to start testing his genetic prowess by fielding runners, the game really is up for most.

Even the few that make a good start on the track tend to find their books and sales yield both on the slide. As a result, the types that are entitled to need a little more time tend to find themselves almost wholly abandoned. If you're keeping the faith with your stallion, all you can do is stand him at this kind of fairly token fee pending the testimonials of the winner's circle. The trouble is that even an excellent ratio of track success, when your volume is so low, will be submerged by "yet another stakes winner" advertised for rivals who may have 500 more foals on the ground across their first three crops.

The trick, among the younger sires, is to distinguish between



Tapiture | EquiSport Photos

those lurking at this level only pending a breakout, and those who are merely clinging to hang on. Because we must never forget that Into Mischief himself once spent a couple of years languishing at \$7,500.

An alternative source of value at this level is a handful of stalwarts who have quietly carved out a respectable niche of service for breeders of modest means and realistic ambitions; plus a few younger ones who appear on course for that kind of yeoman viability. **Cont.**

Happy Holidays

DRAIN THE CLOCK	\$10,000
KARAKONTIE	\$15,000
MCKINZIE	\$30,000
OLYMPIAD	\$35,000
RAGING BULL (FR)	\$10,000
SPUN TO RUN	\$10,000
◀ TAPIT	\$185,000
TAPWRIT	\$7,500

GAINESWAY

Take **TAPITURE**, for instance. He was launched with plenty of volume: in fact, in his intake only **American Pharoah** has more named foals. Granted that the quality clearly couldn't match the quantity, at this level, his ratios will probably never be very startling. But he has shown himself able to get plenty of black-type action with an adequate mare and, while Repo Rocks this year became only his second domestic graded stakes winner, his 111 Beyer in blitzing the GIII Toboggan S. and a runner-up finish in the GI Carter together complement the Classic-placed Jesus' Team as evidence that someday **Tapiture** is going to land an elite score at just \$7,500.

At the same fee, his farm has not managed to muster anything like the same demand for **COUNTRY HOUSE**, who had to make do with just 119 mares across his first three books and endured corresponding inattention for his first yearlings. But he did sell one for \$250,000, and I hope he can similarly defy the odds once he gets a foothold on the track over the next couple of years.



Country House | Matt Goins

His inherent merit was lost in all the blather about the horse he supplanted in the Derby, but his performance there was absolutely consistent with the progress he'd been making and it was terribly unfortunate that he never had the chance to corroborate his breakout--especially after the gamble of trying again the following year left him even more of a forgotten horse. It's ridiculous that so many of those that finished behind him at Churchill were launched with huge books at much higher fees. **Country House**'s sire was always scandalously underrated, but he's inbred to the Sam-Son matriarch No Class (Nodouble) and could certainly breed a horse capable of attending to his unfinished business with the Derby.

Darby Dan is definitely worth a visit for those working with this kind of budget, then, as a look at our podium will confirm, and the same is true of Airdrie. **Cont.**



FLIGHTLINE

Tapit - Feathered, by Indian Charlie

HIGHEST COVERING SIRE AVERAGE IN THE LAST 15 YEARS

for a first Year stallion

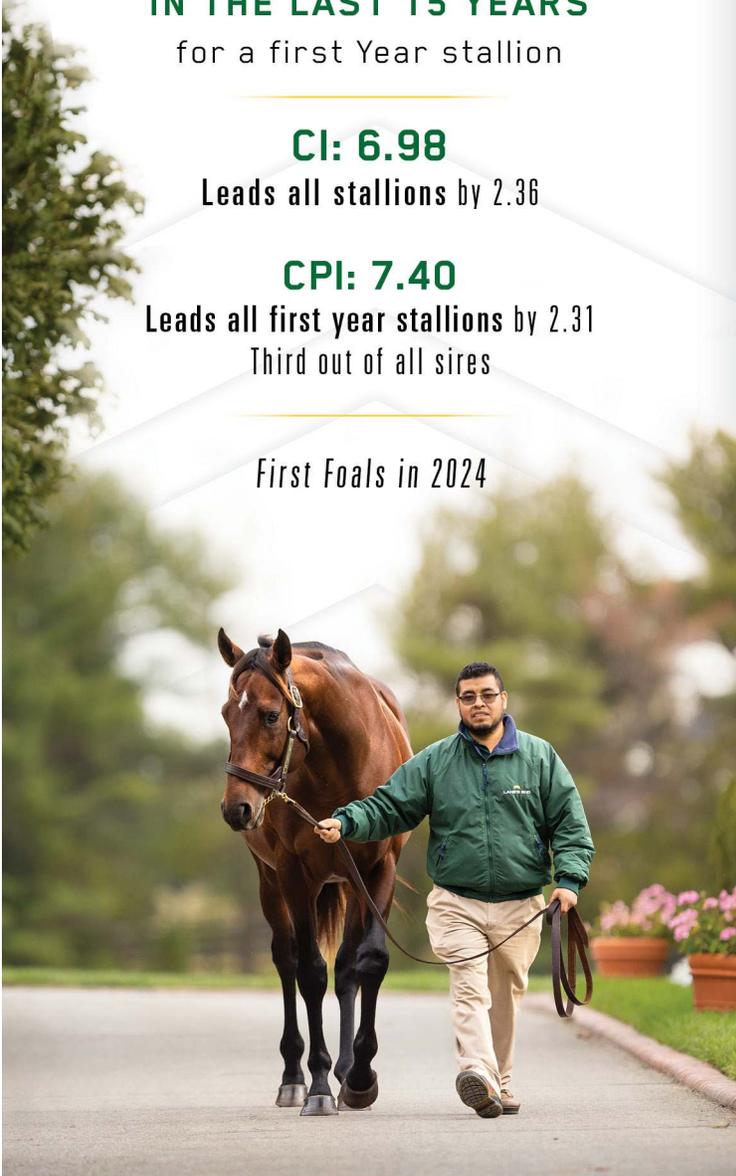
CI: 6.98

Leads all stallions by 2.36

CPI: 7.40

Leads all first year stallions by 2.31
Third out of all sires

First Foals in 2024





LANE'S END

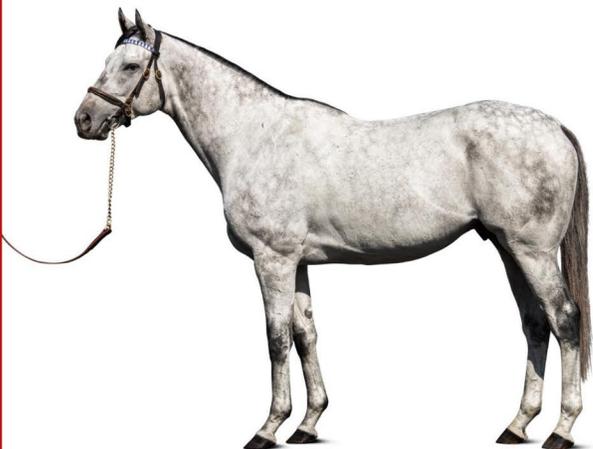
Fee: \$150,000

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THE FIRST E\$\$ENTIAL

If it's making money, **Essential Quality** is proving he can do it. Already leading his sire crop at stud: **first weanlings sell for up to \$485k** with a class-leading average of \$308k. Just imagine.



\$65,000 S&N

Darley

True, a couple of that farm's most attractive options demand a little nerve, in that they must negotiate the tricky chicane between small books and the maturity of their first stock, but both are now a bet to virtually nothing at \$5,000.

Nobody could have expected **PRESERVATIONIST** to set the world on fire overnight, having won his Grade I at six, but he's had 13 juvenile winners already from 41 starters--a ratio that matches or beats many peers working from monster books. Unsurprisingly, in the world we live in, his second crop was quiet at the sales but earlier transactions of \$280,000, \$260,000 and \$250,000 show the kind of stamp of horse he can produce. And there are few stallions in any bracket with a better shape to their pedigree, with King Ranch queens Courtly Dee and Too Chic standing opposite each other. I'd be amazed if **Preservationist** doesn't make a broodmare sire.

DIVISIDERO was never going to cause a stampede, either, having been so recklessly "uncommercial" as to advertise his constitution on the racetrack until the age of seven. He duly had a small debut crop, prompting little interest at the yearling sales, but from this tiny foothold he has mustered a very talented horse in Vote No, whose three starts to date comprise maiden/stakes/length defeat in a Grade II. He had a good winner at Gulfstream just last week, too, leaving him top of the freshman table by earnings per starter.



Preservationist | EquiSport Photos

In the meantime, the eight yearlings sold from his second crop, again very small, included a colt and filly that each made six figures at the September Sale.

So **Divisidero** is hinting, to those who pay heed, that he could yet claim a role in filling the void left by the loss of his sire Kitten's Joy. Remember that his two GI Woodford Reserve Turf Classics, 13 triple-digit Beyers and length defeat in the GI Breeders' Cup Mile have a genetic bedrock in none other than Cosmah as fifth dam. **Cont.**

Happy Holidays

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**TOP SIRE.
SALES SIRE.
SIRE OF SIRES.**

3 new G1SWs in 2023

ARABIAN KNIGHT

Pacific Classic Stakes (G1)

ADARE MANOR

Clement L Hirsch Stakes (G1)

A MO REAY

Beholder Mile Stakes (G1)

**Yearlings at Keeneland
September 2023 sold for**

\$2,500,000

\$2,000,000

\$1,350,000

\$1,350,000

\$1,000,000

\$900,000

\$900,000 etc.

Sire sons already include:

NYQUIST (G1 sire)

OUTWORK (G1 sire)

LAOBAN (G1 sire)

GOLDEN PAL (G1 sprinter)

MO DONEGAL (G1 Classic winner)

YAUPON (G1 sprinter)

MO TOWN (G1 winner)

MO FORZA (G1 winner)

UNCLE MO

Fee: \$150,000

COOLMORE®
A M E R I C A



Demarchelier | EquiSport Photos

The crass neglect of turf sires also requires us to draw attention to **DEMARCHELIER (GB)** at \$7,500. His unfortunate derailment, after an immaculate start to his career, required Bluegrass breeders to show uncharacteristic breadth of perspective by grasping their good fortune in having access not only to a son of the European great Dubawi (Ire) but also to an outstanding Classic family. **Demarchelier's** first crop will not come fully into their own until stretching out at three, but a perfectly respectable start by his American juveniles is not even half the story, with a youngster group-placed in France from a handful of starters over there.

His veteran neighbor at Claiborne, **FIRST SAMURAI**, is a seriously productive horse to be standing at the same fee. He's actually inside the top 20 active stallions on lifetime earnings, and it's very scrupulous of the farm to advertise only six millionaires when he also has one who came up cents short at \$999,000! That's not enough for the typical breeder, apparently, as he's only getting small books nowadays. But if you want to put a winner under your mare, here's a Hopeful/Champagne winner by Giant's Causeway for a fraction of the price required to reach many horses of less accomplishment who have yet to sire the winner of a maiden claimer.

TOM'S D'ETAT won't have a runner himself until next year yet has somehow just suffered a third consecutive fee cut, from an opening \$17,500 to \$7,500. That reflects the modest commercial traction of his first yearlings, but on the racetrack he achieved a high level with maturity--nine consecutive triple-digit Beyers--and he's by a sire of sires out of a Giant's Causeway mare whose own mother was a sister to **Candy Ride (Arg)**. Tom's D'Etat has every right to sire runners at a fee that minimizes those risks equally attached to more expensive but similarly unproven horses.

That said, there's no denying the superior impression made by the first yearlings presented by **CARACARO**. They were processed at an average of \$41,745 from a base of just \$6,500, thanks partly to a filly who brought \$175,000. In exemplary hands at Crestwood, Caracaro also kept some good company in a light track career and has a physique reminiscent of his expensive sire.

By the way, before we proceed to our Value Podium, don't forget that we surveyed the new sires separately in the first part of this series. That was on the premise that they seldom offer sufficient value, strictly on their merits, to have any chance of a podium against the proven horses in the higher brackets. But that wouldn't apply to a couple we highlighted at this level: the teak-tough and classy **SMOOTH LIKE STRAIT** is almost insulted by a fee of just \$3,500, while **LOGGINS** actually mounted the top step of the newcomers' podium at \$7,500.

VALUE PODIUM

Bronze: COPPER BULLET
More Than Ready--Allegory (Unbridled's Song)
Darby Dan \$7,500

Bronze for Copper? Why not, when this horse has been the medium of a pioneering experiment: not only complimentary covers for mares that satisfied certain selection criteria, but a \$5,000 award to their owners once certified in foal!

Nor have their dividends stopped there. The first intimation that the novel strategy was paying off came at the 2-year-old sales, when 11 members of **Copper Bullet's** debut crop--comprising 34 named foals--achieved the fourth-highest median (\$65,000) among new sires, headlined by colts selling at Ocala for \$275,000 and \$260,000. He then did something even more unusual by actually advancing the yield realized by his second crop of yearlings.

Cont.

ARMY MULE

2024 Stud Fee: \$25,000 LFSN

2023 ACTIVE SIRES RANKED BY % STAKES WINNERS TO RUNNERS

Rank	Sire	2024 Stud Fee	%5W5
1	Justify	Private	8.7%
-	Girvin	\$30,000	8.7%
3	Good Magic	\$125,000	8.1%
4	Gun Runner	\$250,000	8.0%
5	ARMY MULE	\$25,000	7.7%



www.hillndalefarms.com



LGB, LLC 2023

At a time when even those of his peers who had made a flying start with their first runners were suffering from the usual slide--so fatuously do purchasers follow the herd--the handful representing his second crop at the sales achieved a median (\$55,000) surpassed, among Kentucky sires, only by Omaha Beach.

After another restricted book this spring, **Copper Bullet** will surely be generating demand after producing Copper Tax to win five off the reel, including two stakes (one by nearly seven lengths), before flattening out from a messy trip in the GII Remsen S. Overall **Copper Bullet** has had half a dozen winners from 19 starters, including another placed in stakes company.

It all stands to reason, for a four-length winner of the GII Saratoga Special who flashed residual talent at both three and four despite only fitful visits to the track. With a classy French family behind him, his innovative showcasing may turn out to give us plenty more to think about.



Greatest Honour in the Fountain of Youth | Coglianes

Silver: GREATEST HONOUR

Tapit--Tiffany's Honour (Street Cry {Ire})

Spendthrift \$7,500

This farm's system has adapted very well to the upgrading of its roster over recent years but here we have a horse combining a hint of elite caliber at the kind of basement fee that first made the model work. Having duly welcomed 178 mares into his debut book, he's surely going to produce a headliner or two to maintain momentum through the crossroads ahead. As ever, with high volume, you'd want to be taking one of his nicer specimens to market. But plenty of commercial breeders will be happy to accept those terms for such a lenient fee.

On the racetrack Greatest Honour ultimately proved an anti-climax but only after showing ample to suggest that he had inherited a functioning line to one of the great modern families.

And at least his fading has brought affordable access to those aristocratic genes, with second and fourth dams both Broodmares of the Year, divided by a GI Kentucky Oaks winner.

Greatest Honour took four starts to break his maiden, but that was fair enough when he was sharing an education with **Olympiad**, **Speaker's Corner** and Known Agenda, and he duly beat a subsequent Grade II winner when doing so. Improvement was barely required, then, in making a dazzling emergence on the Derby trail in the GIII Holy Bull S. and GII Fountain of Youth S. He was so strong at the wire in these races that it was a jolt when he could not follow through in the GI Florida Derby, but he disappeared for a year and never really retrieved the thread.

As we've indicated, this horse straddles the divide in that busy Spendthrift covering shed. He's standing at the kind of commercial fee that brings corresponding numbers behind him. But he definitely had a ton of class, far more than his final profile suggests, and recycles genes that could produce any kind. Few stallions at this level will appeal to the breeder who wouldn't mind keeping a filly, but that's a measure of the way Greatest Honour has all bases covered.

Gold: HIGHLY MOTIVATED

Into Mischief--Strong Incentive (Warrior's Reward)

Airdrie \$7,500

I'm going to put it on the line here and declare that this is the value play, hands down, among all the aspiring young sires in Kentucky.

Highly Motivated resides at a farm that strives to price stallions fairly without making breeders pay another way by flooding the catalogues. The 141 mares he covered last year represents a maximum subscription, by its restrained standards, and reflects what a talented runner he was. We'll return to that, but the big news is what has happened to his page since.

If pressed, I suspect that Airdrie might have conceded that the only reason he launched at a fee this low was that it wasn't totally clear that his young dam, albeit a black-type winner in a light career, had much genetic back-up to complement the brilliance we know to expect from Into Mischief. But now look!

Since he went to stud, the two named foals she had delivered since **Highly Motivated**--only her third and fourth overall--have both emerged as elite performers. The 3-year-old by Flintshire (GB), Surge Capacity, has emerged from nowhere to be beaten by a single rival in five starts, winning a maiden, two Grade IIIs and now the GI Matriarch S. And the 2-year-old filly by **Practical Joke** produced the debut of the Saratoga meet, geared down by 12 3/4 lengths for a 90 Beyer, before enduring a horror trip and still failing by only half a length to run down Brightwork (**Outwork**) in the GI Spinaway S.

Cont.

A *December* to Remember!

LAST WEEK'S DECEMBER DIGITAL SALE PRODUCED:

- **\$3,167,000** in gross sales
- **700** registered bidders
- Buyers in **27** states
and **3** countries
- Sale topper sold to **Australia**

\$180,000 Sale Topper



Breeze Easy (GB)

Racing/broodmare prospect

"Bidding from Australia, it's exciting for me to be able to buy a Graded placed racemare fresh off a nice win on the turf only several days earlier in the US. I've bought many fillies and mares around the world online and found the Fasig process seamless and the information provided was first class and gave me the confidence to click a button and buy a mare.

It's now very exciting to have a mare running in stakes races in the U.S. before I bring her back to Australia to either continue racing or be retired to my Willow Park Stud in Scone."

– **Glenn Burrows, purchaser of sale topper Breeze Easy (GB)**

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Combine those new talents with **Highly Motivated** himself, and you're looking at a mare entering blue hen territory at the age of 11. Throw in the expensive genes of his sire, and it's hard to resist reminding ourselves that Into Mischief himself once stood at exactly this fee.

A quick refresher: **Highly Motivated** beat no less a horse than Known Agenda (**Curlin**) in his maiden before breaking the Keeneland track record in his stakes debut, clocking the second highest juvenile Beyer of his crop. After a messy stakes debut, he probably did himself a disservice in pushing champion **Essential Quality** so hard in the GII Blue Grass S., just run out of it by a neck, as he left connections no choice but to stretch his speed on the first Saturday in May. His Derby turned into one of those that require an 11-month lay-off, yet he regrouped to claim another track record-one previously held for 37 years by a Horse of the Year-in the GIII Monmouth Cup.

Look, this is a horse with something for everyone. He's a commercial no-brainer, yet benefits from the relative market protection of a commendably restrained farm. And he has just enjoyed a freakish genetic upgrade that creates just as much interest for breeders playing a longer game, as well. Much as had always been true of our silver medallist, **Highly Motivated** now offers cut-price access to elite blood for anyone who would be happy to retain a filly. Among the four-figure options, no other stallion has this kind of five-star appeal.

Value Sires under \$10,000: the Breeders Speak

We asked breeders to weigh in on who their top picks were.

George Adams of Housatonic Bloodstock serves as the Director of Stallions and Breeding for Wasabi Ventures.

GOLD: Tapiture (Tapit-Free Spin, by Olympio), Darby Dan Farm, \$7,500.

Tapiture would be my best value pick at under \$10,000 in Kentucky. For me, value at this price point is about a horse's ability to get runners rather than explicitly commercial considerations, and **Tapiture** has a high percentage of runners to foals, and an excellent winners/runners ratio. He also has a strong 4.7% stakes winners/foals aged 3 and up. His 11.3% stakes horses/foals is solid as well. Plus he can get you a two-year-old, which we all like to have. He has 25 juvenile winners already in 2023, with a pair of black-type winners and five more that are stakes-placed. To me, that makes him very good value and an excellent choice with which to start off a young mare--especially since his physical makes him easy to breed to.

SILVER: Demarchelier (GB) (Dubawi {Ire})-Loveisallyouneed (Ire), by Sadler's Wells, Claiborne Farm, \$7,500.

Demarchelier is a really interesting horse at this level. With the

start that he's off to with his first crop this year, he has a big chance to make it as one of the next good turf stallions here, I think. His CI shows that he didn't get the best book of mares for these first foals, which isn't unexpected for a two-turn turf horse by Dubawi in Kentucky. But despite his own later-maturing tendencies and that lack of support, he's got double-digit winners to his credit already with far fewer foals than some of the top freshmen. His winners have come in good maiden special weight races, and he has a group horse in France and a good stakes colt in New York. He's also had some dirt winners, which doesn't hurt his chances. He's a horse that I could see standing for more down the road (and he got a bump for '24), and I think that makes him good value this year.

BRONZE: Instagrاند (Into Mischief-Assets of War, by Lawyer Ron), Taylor Made Stallions, \$7,500.

Typically I have a hard time calling an unproven stallion a good "value" just because I think that it has to be a function of their ability to get runners. But in the case of **Instagrاند**, who will have his first 2-year-olds next year, I think he's got so many things going for him that he counts as value this coming spring. He was the first seven-figure sales son of Into Mischief, and he was so precocious--which you can easily see why by looking at him--I have a hard time believing that he's not going to be giving Authentic a run for his money at the top of the freshman sire list next year. At 190 mares bred in that first year, he'll have plenty of ammunition, and we all know the quality of some of the mares that Larry Best sent to him, which will set him apart from some of the others at this price point. His first crop have sold well, and the ones that I have seen have looked quick and early. So when they come out firing early next year and put **Instagrاند** right at the top of the freshman sire list, I think that'll make his '24 fee look like pretty good value.



Instagrاند | Jon Siegel

BRILLIANT

G1-WINNING MILLIONAIRE

One of the most popular
horses from the **CANDY RIDE**
sire line in 2023

Vekoma	212
Gun Runner	166
Pinehurst	146
Twirling Candy	130
Rock Your World	118
Game Winner	96

*numbers are mares bred in 2023



Bred on the same cross as
GUN RUNNER:

CANDY RIDE (ARG)
– over –
GIANT'S CAUSEWAY

PINEHURST

Twirling Candy - Giant Win, by Giant's Causeway | \$7,500

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Andrew Cary, Cary Bloodstock

Gold: Loggins (Ghostzapper–Beyond Blame, by Blame), Hill 'n' Dale Farms, \$7,500.

Excellent physical, high-level talent, and the pedigree to succeed. He was a pricey Saratoga yearling and ran to his looks. Beaten a nose by champion Forte in a Grade I and looks like a slam dunk under \$10k as a first year sire with big upside. Hill 'n' Dale has an excellent reputation developing stallions with his profile such as **Army Mule** and Maclean's Music.

Silver: Instagrand

Into Mischief has already sired the likes of **Practical Joke**, Maximus Mischief, and Goldcents and his reputation as a sire of sires will only grow in the future. **Instagrand** was a precocious and brilliant 2-year-old and he should have lots of early runners next summer with his first crop. His first crop of yearlings averaged over \$44k this year.

Bronze: Beau Liam (Liam's Map–Belle of Perintown, by Denere), Airdrie Stud, \$6,000.

He had elite talent and his first few races were jaw-dropping. Another beautiful physical, he has all the ingredients to succeed and has been well supported for an under \$10k sire. His first foals look the part and were well-received at the November sales.

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VALUE PODIUM



HIGHLY MOTIVATED

Airdrie | \$7,500



GREATEST HONOUR

Spendthrift | \$7,500



COPPER BULLET

Darby Dan | \$7,500

NO APPEALS IN GREAT WHITE WAY

(cont. from p1)

The reason why? According to the Gaming Commission, the decisions of the stewards are final and not subject to appeal.

Here was the Gaming Commission's response to the two owners:

"On December 17, 2023, the New York State Gaming Commission received correspondence from the connections of two horses that participated in the 9th race at Aqueduct Race Course on December 16, 2023. Specifically, the connections and/or their representatives sought to appeal the stewards' disqualification of the horse Brick Ambush and the stewards' declination to find interference by the horse Antonio of Venice. The correspondence collectively states disagreement with the decision of the stewards."

"The Commission responded to the connections today (attached), advising them that the decisions to disqualify Brick Ambush and to not find interference by Antonio of Venice were judgment calls "based on questions of fact, which the stewards are empowered to make pursuant to Commission Rule 4039.20 (9 NYCRR §4039.20), and the decision(s) (are) therefore not appealable to the Commission, pursuant to Rule 4039.5. New York Courts have long held that stewards' placement decisions are questions of fact that cannot be appealed. See, e.g., In the Matter of the Seventh Race of June 12, 1996 at Belmont Park [May I Inquire] (NYSRWB 1996), confirmed, Matter of Moshera v. Bilinski, 244 A.D.2d 555 (2d Dep't 1995); see also Discenza v. N.Y. Racing Ass'n, 134 Misc. 2d 3, 7-8 (N.Y. Civ. Ct. 1986); Shapiro v. Queens County Jockey Club, 184 Misc. 295, 300 (N.Y. Mun. Ct. 1945). For these reasons, the stewards' decision is final and the New York State Gaming Commission cannot consider your appeal."

Attorney Drew Mollica, who represents Reeves, ripped into the Gaming Commission over its decision. **Cont.**



Brick Ambush | Coglianese

“I’m going to do the research of the law but for this commission to stand by that technicality speaks volumes about the level of insensitivity and incompetence that permeates this industry,” he said. “We could still go to court. I’m not so sure the rules actually say that, but let me do some research. To stand behind this kind of technicality bypasses the bigger issue. They are saying we can do what we want when we want, and that is farcical and they should be embarrassed.”

The controversy resulted from a pile-up at the quarter-pole, where three horses were involved in a bumping incident that caused each one to steady to varying degrees. Antonio of Venice, who was on the rail, came out and appeared to start a chain reaction that caused The Big Torpedo and Solo’s Fury (Solomini) to take up. Solo’s Fury was essentially eased after the incident and finished last.

While this was going on, Brick Ambush sat outside the other three horses, never bumped anyone, stayed in the same path and appeared to have nothing to do with the incident. The inquiry was posted shortly after the horses crossed the wire and, briefly, the No. 1, who was Antonio of Venice, was blinking on the toteboard. But after a lengthy review of the race, the stewards did not take down Antonio of Venice, ruling instead that it was Brick Ambush who caused the problems and placing him last. In addition, they gave Brick Ambush’s rider Junior Alvarado a three-day suspension for careless riding.

“I felt like I was robbed, like I was mugged,” Reeves said.

On the Stewards’ Decisions page on the NYRA website, here is how the stewards described the race and their reasoning for taking down Brick Ambush: Steward’s inquiry. At the 1/4 pole #12 Brick Ambush (Junior Alvarado) came in, causing a chain reaction. The #11 Solo’s Fury (Jose Lezcano) pushes down into the #7 The Big Torpedo (Javier Castellano). After reviewing the video and speaking with the riders, the stewards disqualified the #12 Brick Ambush for interference and place him behind the #11 Solo’s Fury.”

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KEENELAND 2024 SPRING STAKES SCHEDULE FEATURES 100TH TOYOTA BLUE GRASS

In addition to awarding a season record \$8.1 million for its 19 stakes races over the course of the meet running from Apr. 5-26, Keeneland will also celebrate the 100th running of the \$1-million GI Toyota Blue Grass S. this spring. A total of \$1.5 million is being contributed to the stakes purses from the Kentucky Thoroughbred Development Fund (KTDF), pending approval from the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission.

“Lucrative purses and outstanding competition make Keeneland’s Spring Meet a highlight of the racing calendar for horsemen, horseplayers and fans during the first half of the



Tapit Trice, winner of the 99th Toyota Blue Grass | *Coady*

year,” Keeneland Vice President of Racing Gatewood Bell said. “We look forward to hosting the country’s best horses and their connections here in April.”

A spring fixture for 3-year-olds with an eye on the Kentucky Derby, and an informal Lexington holiday, the Blue Grass has been held at Keeneland since the track’s first spring meet in April 1937 and was first sponsored by Toyota in 1996. Run on the first Saturday of the Keeneland season, the race carries a lucrative 100 points for the first Saturday in May for the winner. It leads four other stakes races on the day, including the GI Madison S., the GII Appalachian S., the GII Shakertown S., and the GIII Commonwealth S.

Running on Keeneland’s opening day will be the 86th edition of the GI Central Bank Ashland S., the GIII Transylvania S., and the Lafayette S. The first named carries 100 points toward the Road to the Kentucky Oaks. Early nominations for the Oaks and Derby preps are due by Feb. 17, and late nominations are due Mar. 20.

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THE MOST-READ TDN STORIES OF 2023

As the year winds down, now is a relatively quiet time for horse racing. But there was nothing quiet about 2023, a year, it seems, where the bad news stories overshadowed the good news stories. What resonated most with *TDN* readers? Unfortunately, the answer seems to be our stories that reported on some of the darker aspects of the sport. Here are the top 10 most widely read stories of 2023 and the number of views they received:

Cont.

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Practical Move | Horsephotos

1) **Europeans Unleashed As Santa Anita is Struck by Tragedy**, by Emma Berry (96,627 views). TDN European Editor Emma Berry arrived at Santa Anita as the sport and the Breeders' Cup was dealing with another blow, the death of Practical Move (**Practical Joke**) and the injury suffered by Geaux Rocket Ride (**Candy Ride {Arg}**), who would eventually be euthanized. She marveled at the beauty of Santa Anita and watched the European contingent prepare for the races, but found it hard to forget that it had been another difficult week for the sport. "Even with such brilliant beauty close at hand, it was hard to revel in what should have been a joyful morning as the image of the prone Practical Move lingered on in the mind's eye," she wrote.

2) **Racing World Mourns Death of Lady O'Reilly**, by Emma Berry (96,536 views). Berry reported on the passing of highly successful and longstanding owner-breeder Lady Chrissy O'Reilly, the owner of Haras de la Louviere in Normandy, who died at the age of 73.

3) **Fatalities Mar Travers Saturday at Saratoga**, by Bill Finley (51,660 views). The Saratoga meet saw an unusually high number of breakdowns, but two stood out. Maple Leaf Mel (Cross Traffic) broke down a jump or two before the finish of the GI Test S., a race she was well on her way to winning. In an eerily similar scenario that had occurred on the GI Travers S. card, New York Thunder (**Nyquist**) had the GI H. Allen Jerkens Memorial S. all but won before breaking down a few feet before the finish. On the same card, a horse named Nobel (Ire) (Lope de Vega {Ire}) was also euthanized. Bill Finley wrote of a Travers Day that was supposed to be about everything that is great with the sport turning into one of the ugliest afternoons ever at Saratoga.

4) **Everything Was Done to Save Him: Derby Hero Desert Crown Euthanized**, Staff Report (50,946 views). The story reports on the death of Desert Crown (GB) (Nathaniel {Ire}), the brilliant winner of the 2022 Derby, who was euthanized at Newmarket Equine Hospital after failing to recover from an injury sustained on the gallops in August.

5) **Jockey Alex Canchari Passes Away**, by Bill Finley (50,438). In one of the sadder stories of the year, Midwest-based jockey Alex Canchari passed away in March at the age of 29 after taking his own life, sparking discussions about jockeys' mental health.

6) **Horse of the Year Havre De Grace Passes Away**, by Alan Carasso (48,136). Havre de Grace (Saint Liam), the 2011 Horse of the Year, passed away in April. Wayne Sweezey, who boarded Havre de Grace at his Timber Town Farm, confirmed that the 16-year-old mare hemorrhaged multiple times and died after producing a colt by Into Mischief the afternoon of Apr. 28.

7) **Pretty Mischievous Wins Test; Maple Leaf Mel Breaks Down at Wire, is Euthanized**, Staff Report (41,426). Like the breakdown of New York Thunder later on in the meet, the breakdown of Maple Leaf Mel in the Test S. shook Saratoga and cast a pall over the meet.

8) **HIWU Descends Upon a Shedrow, Upending Life For a Mom-and-Pop Stable**, by TD Thornton (30,863). John Pimental is a small-time trainer who was well-liked, worked hard and had never been in any trouble during his long career. That all changed when agents for the Horseracing Integrity and Welfare Unit (HIWU) descended upon John's stable and upended his world: one of his horses had tested positive for 193 picograms per milliliter of methamphetamine, a street drug of abuse that is classified as a "banned" substance in racing. The story details Pimental's fight to clear his name and takes a look at the tactics HIWU used to make the case that Pimental had violated its rules.

9) **Sire Of Sires, WinStar Farm's Champion Speightstown Euthanized**, Staff Report (30,066). The story reports on the passing of WinStar Farm's top sire **Speightstown** (Gone West) and his remarkable career as a sire.

10) **The Week in Review: With Forte Non-DQ, NYRA Stewards Owe Public an Explanation**, by Bill Finley (29,977). The Saratoga stewards decided not to disqualify Forte (**Violence**) from his win in the GI Jim Dandy S. at Saratoga, despite what appeared to be rough-riding tactics by Irad Ortiz Jr. that caused Forte to bump Angel of Empire (**Classic Empire**). **Cont.**

But writer Bill Finley thought the bigger story was that there is next to no transparency in racing when it comes to stewards' decisions and that the bettors deserved an explanation over why there was no disqualification.

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HORSESHOE INDY MAKES VETERAN'S DAY DONATION TO HVAF

Team members and racing fans at Horseshoe Indianapolis participated in the third annual Veteran's Day event Nov. 10 to raise proceeds for the Hoosier Veterans and Families, Inc. (HVAF) of Indiana.

The event featured several ways to raise funding and awareness for veterans including naming each race in honor of a veteran associated in some way to Horseshoe Indianapolis. Special saddle towels were also awarded to veterans and family members honored during the racing program. Additionally, a Veteran's Day Pick 5 Challenge was held featuring handicappers placing wagers into the Late Fire Five with all proceeds set going to HVAF.

"This is the third year we have offered the Pick Five Challenge on Veteran's Day and each year, these handicappers are eager to be involved with the cause," said Horseshoe Indianapolis Vice President and GM Eric Halstrom.

In addition to funding raised from the Veteran's Day event, Horseshoe Indianapolis provided a \$4,000 donation. Halstrom recently presented HVAF with a check for \$4,430.15.

"Being able to be a small part of assistance for veterans is very rewarding for us," added Halstrom. "We are proud to be an annual partner with HVAF."

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IRISH WAR CRY SEASON ADDED TO MARYLAND STALLION SEASON AUCTION

Northview Stallion Station's Irish War Cry has been added to the 2024 Maryland stallion season auction, per a press release from the Maryland Horse Foundation. The sale now includes no-guarantee seasons to 17 stallions. It opens Jan. 3 and will run until Jan. 7, with all proceeds benefitting the Maryland Horse Foundation, an organization chartered in 1988 to serve various educational and charitable needs within the Maryland horse industry. The online preview is available [here](#).

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Favorite Moment

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE MOMENT OF 2023: JARED SHOEMAKER

As 2023 draws to a close, the TDN is asking industry members to name their favorite moment of the year. Send yours to suefinley@thetdn.com



Jared Shoemaker | Courtesy Jared Shoemaker

The most memorable moment of 2023 was our Keeneland September yearling class assembling at the sale. I always look forward to that two-week stretch and the excitement surrounding all the new horses we bring into the stable. Twice this year, I thought we were finished buying...once after picking up the Caracaro filly and again after we bought the **War of Will** filly we were (and still are) high on. Then, on the last weekend of the sale, Marc [Wampler] calls me and says "Well, I bought another one." We ended up with six yearlings and I couldn't be happier with any of them, especially the surprise Temple City filly.

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Saturday, Gulfstream #9, post time: 4:06 p.m. EST

SUGAR SWIRL S.-GIII, \$125,000, 3yo/up, f/m, 6f

PP	HORSE	SIRE	OWNER	TRAINER	JOCKEY	WT
1	Bluefield	Field Commission	Edward A. Seltzer	Joseph, Jr.	Zayas	120
2	My Destiny	Majesticperfection	Sam Wilensky	Wilensky	Gonzalez	122
3	Magna Massa	The Big Beast	Heather Irion	Irion	Arrieta	118
4	Intrepid Daydream	Jess's Dream	Miller Racing LLC	Joseph, Jr.	Gaffalione	120
5	Olivia Darling	Palace	Amo Racing USA	Delgado	Ortiz, Jr.	120
6	Headland	Paynter	Thomas Brockley	Weaver	Saez	120
7	Napa Candy	Candy Ride (Arg)	Donald R. Dizney LLC	Oliver	Velazquez	120
8	Spirit Wind	Bahamian Squall	Jacks or Better Farm, Inc.	David	Ortiz	120

Breeders: 1-Ed Pendray & Edward A. Seltzer, 2-Donamire Farm, 3-John Grossi, 4-Paul L. Fowler, Jr., 5-Shalom Farm & Ramon Martinez, 6-Sheltoewe Farm & WinStar Farm, LLC, 7-Donald R. Dizney, LLC & W. S. Farish, 8-Jacks or Better Farm Inc.

Saturday, Gulfstream #10, post time: 4:36 p.m. EST

MR. PROSPECTOR S.-GIII, \$125,000, 3yo/up, 7f

PP	HORSE	SIRE	OWNER	TRAINER	JOCKEY	WT
1	Great Navigator	Sea Wizard	Holly Crest Farm	Owens, Jr	Diaz, Jr.	120
2	Howbeit	Secret Circle	David A. Bernsen LLC, Weijland Holdings LLC, Aldabbagh, Omar and Lambert, Jeffrey	Morey	Bravo	122
3	Scaramouche	Munnings	Nicholas Cammarano, Jr.	Preciado	Velazquez	122
4	Winfromwithin	Into Mischief	David A Bernsen LLC and Aldabbagh, Omar	Morey	Saez	122
5	Hurricane J	Nyquist	Amo Racing USA	Delgado	Ortiz, Jr.	118
6	Dreaming of Kona	Fast Anna	Aldana Gonzalez Racing, Ballou, Lisa & Steve	Spieth	Spieth	122
7	Gilmore	Twirling Candy	SF Racing LLC, Starlight Racing, Madaket Stables, Masterson, R, Stonestreet Stables, Schoenfarber, J Waves Edge Capital LLC and Donovan, Catherine	Walsh	Ortiz	120
8	Long Range Toddy	Take Charge Indy	Veb Racing Stable Corp	Barboza, Jr.	Jaramillo	122
9	Sibelius	Not This Time	Park, Jun H. and Nash, Delia	O'Dwyer	Alvarado	124

Breeders: 1-Holly Crest Farm, 2-University of Kentucky, 3-Stoneway Farm, 4-Mulholland Springs LLC, 5-Haymarket Farm LLC, 6-eLGeer farm, 7-Dividing Ridge Farm, 8-Willis Horton Racing LLC, 9-Taylor Brothers Properties LLC, Pollock Farms, Patrick H. Payne et al.



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NORTH AMERICAN RACING



BLACK TYPE

KING GLORIOUS S., \$101,000, Los Alamitos, 12-17, (S), 2yo, 1m, 1:38.15, ft.

1--**LAST CALL LONDON**, 117, g, 2, by Stay Thirsty

1st Dam: Zo Lo's Lov, by Empire Way

2nd Dam: One Smokin' Lady, by Smoke Glacken

3rd Dam: Pieria, by Atticus

(\$37,000 Ylg '22 FTCAJR). **1ST BLACK TYPE WIN.** O-London, Tom, Lovingier, Terry C. & Zondlo, Eugene; B-Terry C. Lovingier (CA); T-Peter Miller; J-Juan J. Hernandez. \$60,000. Lifetime Record: 8-2-2-2, \$156,870.

2--**Stolen Treasure**, 118, c, 2, Nyquist--Little Treasure (Ity), by Invincible Spirit (Ire). **1ST BLACK TYPE.** O-Reddam Racing LLC; B-Reddam Racing & J McCalmont (CA); T-E Freeman. \$20,000.

3--**Mici's Express**, 118, c, 2, Slew's Tiznow--Harlan Express, by Harlan's Holiday. (\$5,000 Ylg '22 FTCAJR). O-Thomas E. Halasz; B-Eagle Ridge Racing, LLC & Rancho San Miguel (CA); T-Steve R. Knapp. \$12,000.

Margins: NK, 5, HF. Odds: 2.00, 3.60, 1.90.

Also Ran: Stay On the Fence, Gentlemen's Club, Clever Clover, Size Does Matter. Scratched: Tom Seaver.

Last Call London, twice stakes-placed at Del Mar over the summer, earned his first stakes victory in the King Glorious S. on the closing-day card at Los Alamitos Sunday night. Stretching out to a mile for the first time, the bay gelding sat just off pacesetter Stolen Treasure through moderate splits. He rolled up to challenge the pacesetter nearing the stretch and the pair battled down the lane with Last Call London getting the better of his rival late.

"He relaxed nicely and was very strong in the stretch," said winning rider Juan Hernandez. [Stolen Treasure] gave him a good battle, but my horse really dug in."



Last Call London | Benoit

A maiden winner going five furlongs at Santa Anita in June, Last Call London was narrowly beaten when second in the Aug. 11 Graduation S. and third in the Sept. 8 Im Smokin S. He was most recently a non-threatening ninth in the Nov. 3 Golden State Juvenile S. in Arcadia.

"I felt this horse would run long," said winning trainer Peter Miller. "He's a big, leggy horse and always acted like a route horse, so I'm glad he got an opportunity today."

Zo Lo's Love produced colts by Stay Thirsty in 2022 and 2023 and was bred back to that sire this year. **Click for the Equibase.com chart or VIDEO, sponsored by FanDuel TV.**



FIRST-CROP STARTERS TO WATCH: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19 2023 Stud Fees Listed

One Sided (Quality Road), R. A. Rowe Farms
7 foals of racing age/1 winner/0 black-type winners
1-Mahoning Valley, 12:45 p.m. EST, Msw 6f, One Step Aside, 10-1
\$5,000 OTB OMX yrl

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ALLOWANCE RESULTS:

9th-Parx Racing, \$66,500, (NW1X)/Opt. Clm (\$16,000), 12-18, 3yo/up, 6 1/2f, 1:18.66, sy, 3 lengths.

YOUNG SQUIRE (g, 3, Uptowncharlybrown--Ambling Rose, by Montbrook) Lifetime Record: 8-5-0-1, \$145,890.

O/B-Uptowncharlybrown Stud LLC (PA); T-Edward J. Coletti, Jr. *1/2 to Amblin Man (Any Given Saturday), SP, \$211,008; Full to Charlybrown's Rose, SP, \$152,168.

7th-Parx Racing, \$41,250, (S), 12-18, (NW1BX), 3yo/up, f/m, 6 1/2f, 1:20.39, sy, 1 length.

COCOA'S VIVIAN (f, 3, Great Notion--Dress Up, by Not For Love) Lifetime Record: 3-2-0-0, \$69,600. O-Milam Racing Stables; B-William E. Riddle (PA); T-Robert E. Reid, Jr. *\$12,000 Ylg '21 EASOCT.

7th-Delta Downs, \$36,000, 12-18, (NW1X), 3yo/up, 6 1/2f, 1:20.28, ft, neck.

DONEGAL FACTOR (g, 3, The Factor--No Fault, by Blame) Lifetime Record: 9-3-1-1, \$77,956. O-Donegal Racing; B-G. Watts Humphrey (KY); T-Dane Noel. *\$105,000 Ylg '21 KEESEP.



2nd-Mahoning Valley, \$27,500, 12-18, (NW4L), 3yo/up, f/m, 6f, 1:12.34, gd, 1 1/2 lengths.

HARTFUL HOPE (f, 3, Central Banker--She's Stylish, by Posse) Lifetime Record: 12-4-1-2, \$71,208. O-Jimmer Racing; B-Art Bauer (NC); T-Larry E. Smith.

6th-Mahoning Valley, \$27,400, 12-18, (NW1X), 3yo/up, 1m 70y, 1:44.67, gd, 1 1/2 lengths.

MUGSY MALONE (g, 4, Mohaymen--Qudze, by Daaher) Lifetime Record: 29-4-7-4, \$137,972. O-Judy Meyers; B-Mt. Sackville Bloodstock (NY); T-Shane Meyers. *\$37,000 RNA Wlg '19 KEENOV; \$42,000 RNA Ylg '20 FTKSEL.

ADDITIONAL MAIDEN WINNERS:

Custom Sunshine, f, 2, **Custom for Carlos--Synapse** (SW, \$254,859), by Fairbanks. Delta Downs, 12-18, (S), (C), 5f, :59.90. Lifetime Record: 8-1-2-2, \$49,890. B-Coteau Grove Farms, LLC (LA). *\$10,000 Ylg '22 LTBSYM; \$12,000 RNA 2yo '23 TTAAPR.

Shake the Frost, g, 2, **National Flag--Doris' Diamond**, by Monarchos. Mahoning Valley, 12-18, (S), 6f, 1:14.63. Lifetime Record: 3-1-0-0, \$21,942. B-Smokin C LLC (OH).

Chiron, g, 4, **Protonico--Deeds Not Words**, by **Street Sense**. Mahoning Valley, 12-18, 1m, 1:39.54. Lifetime Record: 15-1-4-0, \$93,849. B-International Equities Holding, Inc. (KY).

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Lost Call London (Stay Thirsty) gets up in King Glorious S.
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- Central Banker**, Hartful Hope, f, 3, o/o She's Stylish, by Posse. ALW, 12-18, Mahoning Valley
- Custom for Carlos**, Custom Sunshine, f, 2, o/o Synapse, by Fairbanks. MCL, 12-18, Delta Downs
- Great Notion**, Cocoa's Vivian, f, 3, o/o Dress Up, by Not For Love. ALW, 12-18, Parx Racing
- Mohaymen**, Mugsy Malone, g, 4, o/o Qudze, by Daaher. ALW, 12-18, Mahoning Valley
- National Flag**, Shake the Frost, g, 2, o/o Doris' Diamond, by Monarchos. MSW, 12-18, Mahoning Valley
- Protonico**, Chiron, g, 4, o/o Deeds Not Words, by **Street Sense**. MSW, 12-18, Mahoning Valley
- Stay Thirsty**, Last Call London, g, 2, o/o Zo Lo's Lov, by Empire Way. King Glorious S., 12-17, Los Alamitos Thoroughbred
- The Factor**, Donegal Factor, g, 3, o/o No Fault, by **Blame**. ALW, 12-18, Delta Downs
- Uptowncharlybrown**, Young Squire, g, 3, o/o Ambling Rose, by Montbrook. AOC, 12-18, Parx Racing

UPCOMING MAJOR NORTH AMERICAN STAKES

Date	Race	Track
Dec. 15	GIII Bayakoa S.	LRC
Dec. 16	GII Los Alamitos Futurity	LRC
Dec. 23	GIII Mr. Prospector S.	GP
	GIII Sugar Swirl S.	GP
Dec. 26	GI American Oaks	SA
	GI La Brea S.	SA
	GI Malibu S.	SA
	GII Mathis Mile S.	SA
	GII San Antonio S.	SA
	GII San Gabriel S.	SA
Dec. 30	GII Fort Lauderdale S.	GP
	GIII Harlan's Holiday S.	GP
	GIII Suwannee River S.	GP
	GII Joe Hernandez S.	SA
	GIII Robert J. Frankel S.	SA
Jan. 1	GIII Las Flores S.	SA

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