



TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2015

36 HOURS WITH THE NTRA SAFETY AND INTEGRITY ALLIANCE



The NTRA Team: Kilpack, Gates, Durenberger & Koch

by Lucas Marquardt

Back in 2008, the National Thoroughbred Racing Association (NTRA) launched the Safety and Integrity Alliance. The goal was to promote and implement national standards for racetracks. Through a Code of Standards and an accreditation process, the Alliance addressed myriad issues: injury reporting and prevention; safety equipment and a safer racing environment; medication and testing; health and safety of jockeys; aftercare and second careers for retired equine athletes; and wagering security.

A prominent factor behind the Alliance's formation was that year's much-publicized breakdown of the filly Eight Belles. If it wasn't clear before, it became readily evident that the safety of racing's equine and human stars would be paramount to its future success...or decline.

Six years on, it's fair to say that the Alliance has been a significant positive for the industry. Twenty-three tracks, including nearly every major racecourse in North America, have been accredited. These tracks account for almost 90% of North America's graded stakes races and 70% of pari-mutuel handle. And the Alliance is supported by every major horsemen's group, as well as by the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP).

But what is the Alliance, and what does it do, exactly? Well, it's an A-Team of sorts, a small group of industry experts who visit a track seeking accreditation, and through a series of inspections, grants or rejects accreditation based on how that track adheres to the Code of Standards. Track accreditation lasts two years, so the Alliance visits about half of its accredited tracks on even years, and the other half on odds years. *Cont. p3*



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PEDIGREE INSIGHTS

by Andrew Caulfield



Eskendereya Progeny Show Spirit

It looks as though we are destined to wonder what might have been whenever we hear Eskendereya's name.

As a racehorse this son of Giant's Causeway appeared to have had the 2010 GI Kentucky Derby at his mercy, after he had won all three of his starts earlier in the year. He had been notably impressive in taking the GII Fountain of Youth S. by eight and a half lengths and the GI Wood Memorial by nine and a half. Unfortunately, just a week before the Derby, Eskendereya was found to have a slight filling in his left front leg, from the ankle to the knee. *Cont. p10*

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Eclipse Award Candidate Big Blue Kitten runs the fastest mile and a half in Belmont history

Seven-year-old Big Blue Kitten notched his fourth Grade 1 and 14th career Stakes win in the Joe Hirsch Turf Classic (G1) Stakes, establishing a new course record for the mile and a half in 2:23.39. That's even faster than Secretariat's mile and a half time in the Belmont.

In 2015, Big Blue Kitten won the Joe Hirsch Turf Classic (G1), the United Nations Stakes (G1) for the second time, and the Fort Marcy Stakes (G3), and placed in the Arlington Million (G1), the Manhattan Stakes (G1), and the \$3,000,000 Breeders' Cup Turf (G1).

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in this issue...



Stonestreet Stable's GI Test S. winner Cavorting (Bernardini) was one of 10 fillies entered for Saturday's GI La Brea S. on Santa Anita's opening-day card.

Chelsea Durand
Full field page 12

LORD NELSON TUNES UP FOR MALIBU 12

Lord Nelson (Pulpit), off since May, prepped for his return to the races in Saturday's GI Malibu S. with a four-furlong drill at Santa Anita Monday.

ISHAQ STAR IN MAKING FOR LOZA 13

Ishaq (Harlan's Holiday) is now two-for-two for young trainer Efren Loza, Jr. after an adventurous victory in Saturday's Inaugural S. at Tampa Bay Downs.

TOUCH GOLD TO OLD FRIENDS 1RR

Touch Gold (Deputy Minister) has been pensioned to Old Friends, where he will join Silver Charm, the horse whose Triple Crown he denied in 1997.

from **thetdn.com**

Who are the current leading second-crop sires in Europe?

With 3-time Group 1 winner Ervedya as his highest earner this year, Siyouni (Fr) sits atop the leaderboard of second-crop sires. But who is the 2014 Champion First Crop sire hot on his heels in second?

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36 Hours with the NTRA Safety and Integrity Alliance (*cont. from p1*)

There's only one full-time member of the Alliance, Executive Director Steve Koch, who took over from the original director Mike Ziegler earlier this year. Koch heads up a four-member team that is filled out by a racing operations expert, a security professional, and a veterinarian, each of whom focus on their area of expertise while visiting a track. While Koch may be the lone constant, many of the team members that are called in as needed have been part of the program from the beginning.

"Our people are a huge asset, and their resumes speak for themselves," said Koch. "Mike Kilpack was the chief investigator for the California Horse Racing Board for 25 years, and has seen it all. Jennifer Durenberger is a veterinarian and lawyer, has been a regulator, and she's seen it all. Jim Gates was GM at Churchill for seven years. We're a legitimate source of advice."

On Dec. 3, opening night of Turfway's 2015/16 Winter Meet, the TDN met with the Alliance's four-member team and shadowed them through an accreditation inspection of the Florence, Kentucky oval.

All horses in the TDN are bred in North America, unless otherwise indicated

THE ACTORS

STEVE KOCH - Former VP of racing at Woodbine, Koch was named executive director of the Alliance in April of 2015. In addition to his 12 years at Woodbine, seven in the VP role, Koch has an extensive racing background. His father Gus managed Claiborne Farm for three decades, and most of his five brothers and five sisters are involved in racing in some capacity. Koch has recently returned to Lexington with his wife and children.

JIM GATES - A certified public accountant, Gates spent 14 years at Churchill Downs Inc., seven as the general manager of Churchill Downs Racetrack (1996-2010). Gates helped oversee Churchill's \$121 million renovation, and led the track's "Safety From Start to Finish" initiative. From 2011-2014 he managed the finances and operations of trainer Dale Romans, and currently acts as a CFO consultant. He lives in Louisville.



Jim Gates chats with the Turfway jockeys

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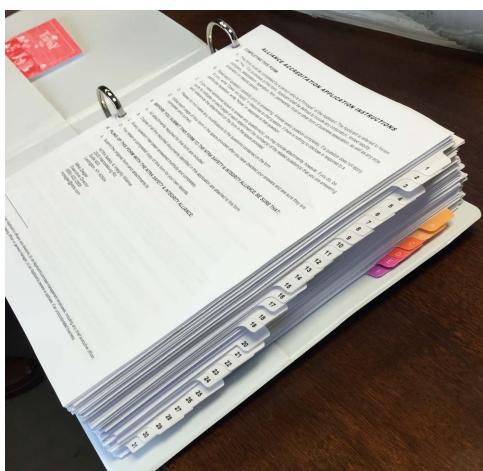
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MIKE KILPACK - Retired Supervising Investigator for the California Horse Racing Board. After spending five years working "dope and vice" in Long Beach, Kilpack spent 25 years at the CHRB. Kilpack also leads the Breeders' Cup security task force, and acts as a consultant for the American Quarter Horse Association. He resides in California.

DR. JENNIFER DURENBERGER - A veterinarian and attorney who brings extensive experience in the pari-mutuel industry. Durenberger began as a regulatory vet for the New York Racing Association (2003-2008) and the California Horse Racing Board (2008-2010). Following a term as an association steward at Delta Downs in Louisiana, Durenberger accepted the position of Director of Racing for the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (2012-2015). Durenberger currently operates a consulting business from her base in Saratoga.

DECEMBER 3rd, 2015

9:57 A.M. - The four-member Alliance team gathers in a small boardroom at Turfway Park that sits adjacent to General Manager Chip Bach's office. Bach, an imposing figure with an affable countenance, comes in to welcome the team back. This is Turfway's fourth accreditation inspection. Each accreditation lasts two years, so Turfway got its first badge of approval back in 2009. "This isn't a rubber-stamp thing, though," says Koch. "We take each inspection seriously, and the tracks take them seriously. But Chip has been great and a big supporter of the Alliance. Turfway doesn't have unlimited resources, and this track is an example that effort and enthusiasm can go a long way."



The Turfway application is a serious tome

member—Koch, Durenberger, Kilpack and Gates. "It took me three weeks to put the thing together," says Hirsch with a mix of pride and weariness.

Cont. p5

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10:10 A.M. - Talk quickly turns to the San Bernardino shootings, which occurred less than 24 hours earlier. Active-shooting situations are something Hirsch and the Alliance team take seriously, and Hirsch indicates that he's contacted local Homeland Security officials about scenario-based training for tracks' security staff.

10:30 A.M. - Kilpack and Hirsch embark upon a tour of the backstretch. Kilpack is a security expert and is assessing fire safety, video surveillance, and Turfway's security protocols. The first stop is the test barn, where the winner of every race, and at least one other horse from the race as declared by the stewards, has urine and blood samples drawn. Kilpack approves of a new video system in the barn, but notes the cameras could have been installed higher than they have been. The cameras act both as a deterrent and as a policing mechanism.

11:15 A.M. - Kilpack begins his inspections of the barns proper. "This is good," he says to Hirsch, pointing to the halters hung just outside the stalls in one trainer's shedrow. "If there's a fire and grooms from other barns come running over to help." Some of the barns at Turfway are over 40 years old, and Kilpack stresses vigilance when it comes to checking for loose wires and other fire hazards. Hirsch and city fire officials go through drills at the track annually, and a third-party company also visits annually to conduct their own inspections.

12:15 P.M. - As they wrap up an initial tour of the backstretch, which included a visit to some of the dormitories, Hirsch and Kilpack walk down the fenceline of the outer perimeter of Turfway's backstretch. On the other side of the chain-link fence is a sizable plot, maybe 15 or 20 acres, with broad, long lines of manure hauled over from the track. "This was Chip Bach's idea," says Hirsch. "We were spending \$700,000 a year to haul away manure. So we decided to compost it on property we already owned. The EPA monitors it, and it works terrific. After six months or so [of composting], we can sell the resulting soil to local nurseries."

1:00 P.M. - Lunch: O'Charley's.

2:00 P.M. - Dr. Durenberger heads up to the receiving barn to meet with Dr. William Farmer, the chief racing veterinarian for the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission (KHRC).

Turfway is somewhat unique in that well over half of its runners on any given night—usually somewhere between 60-65%—ship in from other facilities. As it is, Turfway's barns are almost at capacity, with close to 955 horses stabled here. All this presents a unique challenge for Farmer and his team, who must inspect each and every horse before they step onto the track to race at Turfway. On tonight's nine-race card, that means 97 horses. *Cont. p6*

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LANE'S END

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These days, the vets have another task: Lasix administration. The Alliance fully endorses third-party Lasix, and in 2012, Kentucky mandated that Lasix be given only by a state veterinarian. Kentucky has hired additional vets to help with the additional workload, so now, a team of six KHRC veterinarians works the tracks in Kentucky on racedays. Three tackle vet checks, and three handle Lasix administration, which must be given in a 30-minute window no later than four hours before post-time.

2:30 P.M. - Farmer explains Kentucky's screening process to Durenberger. It begins with an overview of the past performances—"We call it veterinary handicapping," says Farmer. "We look for things that might be red flags: significant drops in class, gaps in races or works, frequent jockey changes, things like that." If something appears out of the ordinary, the vets know to give that horse special attention.



Pink tags indicate Lasix has been administered

2:37 P.M. - Durenberger pokes her head into a stall to watch Dr. Nick Smith, another KHRC vet, conduct a lameness exam. Smith performs a flexion test, pulling the right front leg back and holding it for 30 seconds. He releases it and looks for signs of soreness or inflammation. The horse is then jogged down the shedrow, a protocol that was implemented in Kentucky in 2008, and adopted a year later into the Alliance's Code of Standards as an industry "best practice." Smith and two associates will repeat similar exams another 96 times today. Not all states conduct such extensive pre-race inspections. In Ohio, for instance, pre-race exams aren't even a regulatory requirement.

2:45 P.M. - As the KHRC vets make their rounds, they carry a rugged, handheld computer device. These tablets are synced with a national database, and any information that is entered can be accessed by vets in other jurisdictions. Farmer and his team make notes on each horse, and assign a numerical assessment (1-5) to any areas of concern. If a horse has some slight rounding of the ankle joint, for instance, they might assign the condition a 1, which would be normal for a horse who's racing. The database offers reference points so that any physiological changes can be monitored.

Cont. p7

ON THE RISE

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2015 Sales Averages For The Top 10 General Sires

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Medaglia d'Oro	\$150,000	\$352,500	\$480,000
MALIBU MOON	\$95,000	\$211,263	\$264,166
Speightstown	\$100,000	\$221,807	\$221,250
Pioneerof the Nile	\$125,000	\$168,196	\$212,142
Giant's Causeway	\$85,000	\$159,656	\$190,000
Scat Daddy - Deceased	\$100,000	\$195,515	\$185,294
Curlin	\$100,000	\$226,230	\$160,909
Candy Ride (Arg)	\$60,000	\$130,740	\$146,428
Kitten's Joy	\$100,000	\$125,670	\$69,500

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3:04 P.M. - Back in the vets' office, located in the receiving barn, a vet tech mans a walkie talkie. Vets out at the barns radio back who's been treated with Lasix. There are several checks and balances to make sure horses receive the Lasix shots in a timely manner, and to make sure they're not treated twice. In addition to the radio calls, pink tags are hung outside the stall doors of horses that have been treated. "There are now 16 states who operate under the third-party Lasix rule," says Durenberger. Notable exceptions include New Mexico and California, where different factions in the industry are now debating the merits of third-party Lasix administration. Third-party Lasix is one of the four pillars of RMTC's National Uniform Medication Program, the others being lab accreditation, a multiple medication violation penalty system, and a controlled therapeutic substances list.

3:45 P.M. - Farmer and Durenberger examine the track's equine ambulance, a mid-1980s era Kimzey van that is refitted every few years to keep up with technology. One recent upgrade included the installation of a 3000-watt inverter, so that on-call vets can take digital X-rays and see the results immediately. "And that's an incredibly useful tool," explains Durenberger. "In the old days, a vet would have to take the horse to the clinic to be X-rayed, and then wait for physical X-rays." Other equipment includes a tank attached to the trailer hitch that, in the summer, is filled with ice water and can be used to hose down horses suffering from heat stroke. There are also several aluminum Kimzey leg splints and an array of first-aid equipment.

5:24 P.M. - Jim Gates, the former GM of Churchill Downs, heads down to the jocks' room. He wants to talk about Turfway's safety procedures, and if the jockeys present have any concerns or suggestions.

Chip Bach introduces Gates, then leaves the room, "So you can talk in candor," he says. Gates asks about Turfway's Polytrack surface, which recently underwent a revamp, whereby oil and material was added to the track. The jocks all give the surface a thumbs up. "It's been in great shape," says jockey John McKee. Gates talks to the jockeys about their relationship with track management--Turfway again gets high marks from those present--and about insurance. To be accredited by the Alliance, tracks must maintain a minimum standard of \$1 million, per incident, worth of accident medical expense coverage for all jocks.



Turfway's Polytrack got a thumbs-up from the jockeys

6:00 P.M. - The horses for the first race begin to arrive in the paddock, where the Alliance team and Chip Bach have gathered. The sun has set, and the wind has picked up on a cold December night. "Don't complain about it," says someone walking past. "In a month from now, it'll be 15 degrees and there will be a foot of snow on the ground."



Signs like these are posted to encourage dialogue

6:05 P.M. - The Alliance team and Bach go over Turfway's policy for fatal breakdowns, which includes a necropsy review for every on-track death, and the vast majority of deaths that occur on the backstretch. Bach explains that each breakdown is

sent to an Injury Review Board. The trainer and jockey are interviewed, as is the veterinarian that treated the horse. Thankfully, and despite racing cards comprised mostly of low-level claimers, fatal breakdowns are rare at Turfway. In 2012, the track saw just four breakdowns from 6,923 starters—a rate of 0.58 per 1,000 starters. Last year's rate was a still-excellent 1.06, which compares favorably to the overall rate of 2.02 for dirt starters and 1.75 for turf starters.

Cont. p8

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6:08 P.M. - Bach informs the team that Turfway is about to install an early warning system to alert jockeys of any on-track incidents. The systems includes sirens and lights affixed to the furlong markers. If there is an incident—say the starting gate is unable to be moved—several people have access to a button that will trigger the warning system. "It was only \$8,300," says Bach, "And it was really a no-brainer." Koch loves the idea. "It's going to save someone's life," he says. "We won't know it because the incident won't happen, but it will." The warning system is scheduled to be installed in January.

6:15 P.M. - To chase or not to chase. Picking up on a conversation that began with Gates in the jocks' room, the Alliance team goes over Turfway's ambulance protocols with Bach and the track's full-time paramedic. At some tracks, an ambulance trails the field through a race. Turfway instead has two stationary ambulances, one positioned in the chute at the head of the stretch, and another in the backstretch chute. A few jockeys have told Gates said they prefer to have an ambulance chase them through the race, so in case of an incident, the ambulance would be there in a matter of seconds. Others felt that the time saved by chasing was negligible. The Alliance doesn't officially favor one method over another; nor does the KHRC. At Keeneland, for instance, the ambulance chases the field. Koch, however, said he isn't always a fan of chasing. "The ambulances have to speed in front of the grandstand at 30mph, and it would be easy for a groom or loose horse to end up in front of it," he says. The track's paramedic agrees, and notes that in bad weather, steering an ambulance around the track on slick curves can pose its own dangers.

7:37 P.M. - Durenberger continues her review of Turfway's veterinary protocols. Before race four, she meets with Nick Smith, the veterinarian who earlier in the day performed the pre-race exams, and the two hop into a John Deere Gator located just next to the paddock. Smith looks at each horse as they come into the paddock, then pilots the Gator to the starting gate to watch the horses again as they warm up. In this case, the race is carded at five furlongs, so the starting gate is located on the backstretch.



Smith takes one last look at the field as they load.

The noise of the grandstand fades as Smith steers the Gator around a service road behind the clubhouse turn and, once onto the track, he parks about 50 yards from the starting gate and jumps out. He exchanges a few words with the jockeys as they gallop past, making sure that everyone's warming up well. The dark Polytrack surface is soft and malleable underfoot, and the horses' hooves hardly make a sound. It's a strange, beautiful sight as the field begins to load. It's 36 degrees, and the visible breath of 12 anxious Thoroughbreds swirls about, backlit by the lights of the grandstand in the distance. Smith jumps behind post three to make sure the gate is latched securely. The bell rings, the horses are off, and in just over 58 seconds they will hit the finish line. Smith walks and then jogs back to a point on the turn so that he's able to see the horses galloping out after the race. "That's one of the best times to look at how the horses are going," says Durenberger.

8:10 P.M. - Koch and Gates take advantage of the gate positioning for the fifth race, which at one mile is right on the finish line, to review the gate crew. Is every member of the crew wearing a safety vest? Are the vests zippered up? It's cold, and the answer to both questions is yes. On muggy August days, however, compliance is less uniform. The gate crew are without helmets, something Koch would like to see changed. "Almost every major racetrack has adopted helmets for the assistant starters and they've just started wearing them at Keeneland, which helps us make the case that they should be worn everywhere," he says. "But gate crews around the world are the same—they're resistant to new safety equipment. It's all too common to hear, 'I've been doing this for 25 years and I ain't dead yet!'"

9:00 P.M. - The Alliance team calls it a day. Kilpack is the foodie in the group and is tasked, as is typically the case, with finding a suitable place for dinner. He grimaces at his smart phone. Northern Kentucky has limited options. They wind up at a Logan's Steakhouse.

NTRA ACCREDITED RACETRACKS

Aqueduct Racetrack	Kentucky Downs
Belmont Park	Laurel Park
Canterbury Park	Los Alamitos Race Course
Churchill Downs	Monmouth Park
Del Mar	Pimlico
Fair Grounds	Santa Anita Park
Finger Lakes	Saratoga Race Course
Golden Gate Fields	Suffolk Downs
Gulfstream Park	Sunland Park
Gulfstream Park West	Turfway Park
Indiana Grand	Woodbine
Keeneland	

DECEMBER 4th, 2015

9:00 A.M. - The Alliance team reconvenes on a sunny December morning. Because the previous day's card was held at night, they had ample time to make it through their checklist, and find themselves in the rare position of having accomplished much of what they've set out to do. Kilpack wants to tour the backstretch again, and will go over some things with Chuck Hirsch, Turfway's head of security.

Durenberger and Gates have paperwork to catch up on. And of course there's the massive application binder to go through still. But all in all, they're pleased with the progress they've made. The downtime provides Koch a few minutes to answer some questions from the TDN. Much of it focused around the Alliance's Code of Standards, a 70-page document that can be accessed [here](#).



Hard at work: Jim Gates and Steve Koch

What do you see as the purpose of the NTRA Safety and Integrity Alliance?

KOCH: We talk about the distribution of national uniform standards, and the Safety and Integrity Alliance is an important mechanism for that. We have an extensive Code of Standards that is updated annually, and that is the real power of the Alliance. The Code of Standards is our ideals for the industry—this is where we should be all operating at. As a team, we go to so many racetracks each year, and we pick up on a lot of "best practices" around the industry. Historically, the best practices have been fed into the model rules process, and ultimately baked into the Code of Standards. This distribution of best practices is extremely valuable.

Do you feel the Alliance's accomplishments are sometimes overlooked by the industry?

KOCH: To be honest, the real wins for the industry are generally not things we can make headlines out of. If we're working with a track to get them up to standard on say three areas, you can't exactly do a press release afterward. Because then people say, 'Oh, well how were things done *before*?' A lot of the time, they are discreet wins. We're about advancing a track's cause, not embarrassing it. But it is important for the industry to get behind us. The TDN, for instance, let's us run a free ad every now and then, and that's enormously valuable, since we have limited funding and don't have a lot of opportunities to tell our story. I can't say it enough: we are driving successes for the industry, and we have to keep the momentum behind it.

Can you talk about the Alliance's strategy of setting the bar at a certain level in 2008, and then raising that bar each year?

KOCH: Our goal has been to ratchet up that Code of Standards over time, so that we're driving continuous improvement for the participating racetracks. Coming from Woodbine, I've lived that experience. Mike Ziegler, the Alliance's first executive director, did a fantastic job, and when I was the VP of racing at Woodbine, Mike would send me the updated Code of Standards. As a racetrack operator, you'd say, 'Oh, there's that new thing we have to do.' And we'd go do it.

Are all accredited tracks at the same level?

KOCH: It's a process of evolution for some tracks, and we have to approach it as, 'How can we best help them reach these certain goals?' I spend an awful lot of time interfacing with our member racetracks—and our non-member racetracks, for that matter—advising them on how to work with their horsemen, or work with their own boards, and how to incorporate certain items into their operations.

A good example is that over the last few weeks in New Mexico, they've been talking about the adoption of third-party Lasix administration. It's a new idea for them, and they're grappling with the regulatory aspects of it. So Sunland Park came and asked us about it. How does it work in other jurisdictions? Can we do this internally, in-house, and how would that work? What can the Safety and Integrity Alliance do to help? In this case, I actually wrote a letter to the [New Mexico] Racing Commission and said, bluntly, that if they can't achieve third-party Lasix in the longterm, then Sunland Park can't be an accredited racetrack.

What are some long-term goals for the Alliance?

KOCH: That every racetrack should be meaningfully accredited. Currently we have 23 tracks. So that leaves about 40 tracks to go across North America. I'm also looking at the 2-year-old breeze-up sales, which can absolutely benefit from accreditation. And there's some interest in spreading this to South America. That's maybe a lofty ideal right now, but some groups there have expressed interest.

One of my goals every day, however, is to make sure that the tracks that are participating are noticed for having achieved our Code of Standards. Because they deserve to be noticed for it. It's not a simple thing they've done. It takes a large commitment and a lot of resources to do it. And this isn't a rubber-stamp project. We are actually holding them to task, and we should all really favor these tracks that are achieving the code of standards. Because that is horse racing done right.

Cont. p10

Ultimately, what is the Alliance's role as racing tries to grow and reach new audiences?

KOCH: Horse racing relies on the good will of the public, and you have to be good corporate and social citizens to be successful in any business. On the integrity side, we'd better run a product with some integrity behind it. Otherwise, our product doesn't deserve to be bought. Or in our case, wagered upon. On the safety side, we're involving horses and jockeys, and our deserving existence relies on putting forth a safe product. Our horses are a valuable asset, but we also owe them something. They're running their hearts out for us, and they want to run, and we owe them a safe experience. So the Alliance has everything to do with our long-term existence as a sport.

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Andrew Caulfield's Pedigree Insights (*cont. from p1*)

Trainer Todd Pletcher announced that the colt was "too special of a horse to take any chances." Pletcher added that "I haven't felt like his last couple of gallops have been up to what we normally see. I was hoping that maybe it was attributed to the sloppy track, but we're going to do some more diagnostics later in the week when some of the swelling and filling goes down in his leg. Hopefully it's nothing that would be career ending."

Pletcher was to be disappointed. Eskendereya's retirement was announced only a week after the Kentucky Derby, the cause being cited as a soft-tissue injury. The comments of co-owner Ahmed Zayat make interesting reading, as he described Eskendereya as a "once in a lifetime horse." That needs a bit of adjustment now, after American Pharoah's brilliant efforts.

Zayat owned Eskendereya in partnership with the late Jess Jackson, and Zayat anticipated that this partnership had the fire power required to transform the colt into a leading stallion:

"We are excited about the future and are confident that he will continue to thrill the racing world by siring the best future progeny," Zayat said. "Mr. Jackson is the perfect partner for such a beloved horse and I look forward to working with him as he has proven to be a true sportsman and a credit to our industry. He has tried to create the best breed and bring back the legacy of American racing. He has over 100 broodmares and I have 50, all top broodmares. Between us we are trying to bring stamina back in racing, not just speed. It's very important that I'm staying in, both emotionally and financially."

However, Jess Jackson was to die less than a year later, leaving his widow Barbara Banke to head the Stonestreet Stables operation. Of course Stonestreet also owns 80% of Curlin, of whom Banke said at the start of September that their strategic plan is to ensure that "the world's highest-rated racehorse becomes amongst the world's most important stallions."

A leading 2nd crop sire in 2015 with...

6

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in 2015



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In these circumstances Eskendereya had become rather overshadowed, especially when he was still awaiting his first graded winner, from two crops of racing age. Consequently, it wasn't too surprising

when it was announced at the end of

September that Stonestreet had sold Eskendereya to the Japan Bloodstock Breeders' Association (JBBA). The 8-year-old had spent five years at Taylor Made, with his 2015 book falling to 70 mares from 139 the previous year.

"Mrs. Banke and Stonestreet have done a tremendous job of supporting Eskendereya from day one," said Taylor Made's Ben Taylor, "and I don't believe they ever intended to sell him. But the Japanese have always been very interested and came to see him every year. They recently submitted an offer that was accepted by Stonestreet."

Of course there is an old theory that giving a stallion a one-way ticket to Japan is the surest way of invigorating a stallion's career. This theory found support from Empire Maker, who was sold to the JBBA in November 2010. By the end of 2011 Empire Maker ranked eighth on the leading sires' list, with the help of two Grade I winners, and he did even better in 2012, when his nine graded winners helped him up to second place.

It isn't beyond the realms of possibility that Eskendereya's fortunes will also take a considerable turn for the better--leaving us wondering what might have been had he remained in Kentucky.

MOR SPIRIT, r, 2013

Eskendereya	Giant's Causeway	Storm Cat	Storm Bird
			Terlingua
		Mariah's Storm	Rahy
	Aldebaran Light		Immense
		Seattle Slew	Bold Reasoning
			My Charmer
Im a Dixie Girl 11-3-2-1 7 Fls, 1 GSW	Dixie Union	Altair	Alydar
			Stellar Odyssey
		Dixieland Band	Northern Dancer
	Im Out First 56-10-10-12 10 Fls, 2 SW		Mississippi Mud
		She's Tops	Capote
			She's a Talent
	Allen's Prospect	Sequins	Mr Prospector
			Change Water
		13 Fls, 2 SW	Northern Fashion
			Brilliant Touch

Since his sale, he has been represented by his first graded winner from his first crop, with the very useful turf filly Isabella Sings taking the GII Mrs Revere S. This crop also contains Eskenformoney, runner-up in the GII Gulfstream Oaks and GIII Monmouth Oaks, and Conquest Pacemaker, a stakes winner on turf.

The early signs are that Eskendereya's second crop is destined to outclass its predecessor. There have already been stakes successes for the fillies Right There and Sombree and now the progressive Mor Spirit has followed up his second in the GII Kentucky Jockey Club S. with a smooth victory over Grade III winner Toews On Ice in the GI Los Alamitos Futurity. That said, if Eskendereya is to maintain his progress he will have to do so with a comparatively small third crop, numbering 68 live foals.

Bearing in mind that Eskendereya won only one of his three juvenile starts, it is reasonable to expect his progeny to improve with time and distance. Although he never had the chance to prove his stamina, there was little doubt that he would have thrived over the Triple Crown distances. His first two dams were sired by those Triple Crown stalwarts Seattle Slew and Alydar. Also, his third dam Stellar Odyssey had Kentucky Derby winners as her sire and half-brother, as she was by the 1964 winner Northern Dancer out of Queen Sucree, dam of the 1974 winner Cannonade. Stellar Odyssey was also a half-sister to Kennelot, dam of the 1985 Kentucky Derby runner-up Stephan's Odyssey.

With so much potential stamina in his pedigree, Eskendereya was likely to benefit from some speed in his mates. Sure enough, Mor Spirit is out of Im A Dixie Girl, a precocious daughter of a precocious stallion. Im A Dixie Girl was a sprint stakes winner in August and September of her juvenile season, which also saw her finish second in the GIII Astarita S. Although her sire Dixie Union was by no means a one-dimensional 2-year-old, he won four of his six starts at that age. It is well worth pointing out that Dixie Union's broodmare daughters are having a very rewarding time with their 2015 2-year-olds, with their stakes winners also featuring the very promising GII Remsen S. winner Mohaymen and the fast British Group 2 winner Besharah.

Mor Spirit's second dam, the Virginia-bred Im Out First, packed 10 starts into her first season, but proved durable, gaining her four stakes victories at the ages of four and five. She was very effective over 1 1/16 miles, so Mor Spirit has a fair chance of staying a mile and a quarter.

Im First Out's half-sister Zenith was a non-winner at two, but developed into a graded-placed stakes winner at four. Zenith went on to produce the very smart 2-year-old Great Hunter, who contested the 2007 Kentucky Derby. This is also the family of Curlin's daughter Stellar Wind, winner of the GI Santa Anita Oaks and second in the GI Breeders' Cup Distaff.

Mor Spirit's fifth dam Indian Nurse established a thriving family, thanks mainly to her daughters Native Nurse (dam of the Grade I winners Love Sign and Melodist) and Hill Indian (ancestress of the Grade I winners Star of Cozzene and Matty G.).

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LORD NELSON WORKS FOR MALIBU

Peachtree Stable's **Lord Nelson** (Pulpit) worked four furlongs in company Monday at Santa Anita in preparation for Saturday's GI Malibu S. The sophomore, working with stablemate and Northern Spur S. winner Wolf Man Rocket (Mineshaft), covered the distance in :46.60.

"It looks like he's ready to roll," trainer Bob Baffert said after the work. "It's going to be a really tough race, but the Grade I races are never easy. He needs a lot of things to go his way. He needs a quick pace up front. He's been off for a while, but Grade I opportunities don't come along that often; he'll run well."

Lord Nelson, winner of the GII San Vicente S. last February, has been off since running fourth in the May 2 GIII Pat Day Mile at Churchill Downs.

Baffert will also be represented on Santa Anita's opening-day card by **Maybellene** (Lookin at Lucky), who was entered in the GI La Brea S. Running in the colors of the trainer's wife, Jill Baffert, Maybellene has been off since being promoted to victory in the Mar. 22 Sunland Park Oaks.

"She hasn't run in a long time, but there's been nowhere to run her," Baffert said. "She's training well, but I think the post position draw will determine whether she starts. If she runs one-two-three, it'll be good."

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Saturday, Santa Anita Park, post time: 7:00 p.m. EST

MALIBU S.-GI, \$300,000, 3yo, 7f

PP	HORSE	SIRE	JOCKEY	TRAINER	WT
1	Pain and Misery	Bob and John	Baze	Dominguez	118
2	Marking	Bernardini	Lezcano	McLaughlin	118
3	Watershed	Bernardini	Rosario	McLaughlin	118
4	Runhappy	Super Saver	Stevens	Wohlers	123
5	El Kabeir	Scat Daddy	Smith	Terranova, II	118
6	Bad Read Sanchez	Warrior's Reward	Gutierrez	O'Neill	118
7	Lord Nelson	Pulpit	Bejarano	Baffert	118

Owners: 1-Black Gold Racing, 2-Godolphin Racing, LLC, 3-Godolphin Racing, LLC, 4-James McIngvale, 5-Zayat Stables, LLC, 6-Reddam Racing, LLC, 7-Peachtree Stable

Breeders: 1-Castlepark Farm, LLC, 2-Darley, 3-Darley, 4-Wayne Lyster, Gray Lyster & Bryan Lyster, 5-Rustlewood Farm, Inc., 6-Joe Mulholland Sr., Joe Mulholland Jr., John Mulholland & Karen Mulholland, 7-Clearsky Farms

Saturday, Santa Anita Park, post time: 6:30 p.m. EST

LA BREA S.-GI, \$300,000, 3yo, f, 7f

PP	HORSE	SIRE	JOCKEY	TRAINER	WT
1	Birdatthewire	Summer Bird	Smith	Romans	120
2	Hot City Girl	City Zip	Ortiz	Rice	118
3	Cavorting	Bernardini	Ortiz, Jr.	McLaughlin	123
4	Maybellene	Lookin At Lucky	Bejarano	Baffert	118
5	Lily Pod	Bernstein	Gutierrez	Baltas	118
6	Ben's Duchess	Munnings	Talamo	Sadler	118
7	Rattataptap	Tapit	Baze	D'Amato	118
8	Pleasant Tales	Tale of Ekati	Graham	Stewart	118
9	Moyo Honey	Mizzen Mast	Van Dyke	Gallagher	118
10	Finest City	City Zip	Stevens	Kruljac	118

Owners: 1-Forum Racing IV, 2-Lady Sheila Stable, 3-Stonestreet Stables, LLC, 4-Natalie J. Baffert, 5-Hebert and Queen Bee Racing, LLC, 6-Doubledown Stables, Inc., 7-Mark DeDomenico LLC, Durant or House, 8-Charles E. Fipke, 9-Harlington or Sones, 10-Seltzer Thoroughbreds

Breeders: 1-Lynn Jones & Kathy Jones, 2-Ekleetikos Stable LLC, 3-Swettenham Stud, 4-Colts Neck Stables LLC, 5-Caldara Farm Inc. & William R. Hilliard Jr., 6-Golden Pedigree LLC, 7-Gainesway Thoroughbreds Ltd., 8-Charles Fipke, 9-Whisper Hill Farm LLC, 10-HnR Nothhaft Horseracing, LLC

Saturday, Santa Anita Park, post time: 6:00 p.m. EST

MATHIS BROTHERS MILE S.-GII, \$200,000, 3yo, 1mT

PP	HORSE	SIRE	JOCKEY	TRAINER	WT
1	Ground Rules	Smart Strike	Bejarano	Sise, Jr.	118
2	Perfectly Majestic	Majesticperfection	Desormeaux	Hess, Jr.	118
3	Crittenden	Distorted Humor	Garcia	Harty	118
4	Professor Berns	Bernstein	Blanc	Gallagher	118
5	Soul Driver	Street Boss	Baze	Mullins	118
6	Mister Brightside (Ire)	Lord Shanakill	Smith	Gallagher	118
7	Acceptance	Vronsky	Quinonez	Black	118
8	Ike Walker	Bellamy Road	Espinoza	O'Neill	118
9	Vigilante	Tiznow	Talamo	D'Amato	118
10	Om	Munnings	Stevens	Hendricks	123
11	Ocho Ocho Ocho	Street Sense	Gonzalez	Cassidy	118
12	Fueled by Bourbon	Stroll	Rosario	Miller	118

Owners: 1-Pam & Martin Wygod, 2-Griffin Thoroughbred Stables or Schroeder Farms LLC, 3-Godolphin Racing, LLC, 4-Praz Racing Stb., Delahoussaye or Dye, 5-Bloom Racing Stable LLC or Head of Plains Partners LLC, 6-Walter R. Swinburn, 7-The Elwood Johnston Trust or Riggio, 8-R3 Racing or Calara Farms, 9-Gary L. & Mary E. West, 10-Sareen Family Trust, 11-DP Racing, 12-Rockingham Ranch

Breeders: 1-Pam & Martin Wygod, 2-Brereton C. Jones, 3-Darley, 4-Leverett Miller & Linda Miller, 5-John R. Penn, 6-Oghill House Stud, 7-Old English Rancho, 8-Buck Pond Farm, Inc., 9-Woodford Thoroughbreds, 10-Lavin Bloodstock, Bernie Sams & William S. Farish, Jr., 11-Siena Farms LLC, 12-Claiborne Farm

Saturday, Santa Anita Park, post time: 5:00 p.m. EST

DAYTONA S.-GIII, \$100,000, 3yo/up, 6 1/2fT

PP	HORSE	SIRE	JOCKEY	TRAINER	WT
1	Richard's Boy	Idiot Proof	Espinosa	Miller	117
2	Big Cazanova (Arg)	Giant's Causeway	Rosario	Miller	119
3	Mystery Train (Arg)	Not For Sale (Arg)	Pedroza	Vienna	119
4	Rocket Heat 	Latent Heat	Maldonado	Belvoir	117
5	Big Bane Theory	Artie Schiller	Prat	Gaines	119
6	Plainview	Street Cry (Ire)	Talamo	Jacobson	119
7	Alert Bay 	City Zip	Garcia	Wright	124
8	Bench Warrant	Street Boss	Lezcano	Sadler	117
9	Holy Lute 	Midnight Lute	Gonzalez	Cassidy	119
10	The Great War 	War Front	Desormeaux	Ward	117
11	Somethings Unusual	Vronsky	Van Dyke	McCarthy	119
12	No Silent	Silent Name (Jpn)	Stevens	Mandella	124
13	Toowindytoughalrox	Harlan's Holiday	Pereira	D'Amato	119
14	Coastline 	Speightstown	Baze	D'Amato	119

Owners: 1-Rockingham Ranch, 2-Dona Licha or Barber or Wachtel Stable, Et Al, 3-Red Baron's Barn, LLC or Rancho Temescal, 4-Mike Sanchez, 5-Devereaux or Gross, 6-David Jacobson, 7-Peter Redekop B.C., Ltd, 8-Doubledown Stables, Inc., 9-Class Racing Stable, 10-Tabor, Smith, Magnier, Mrs. John or Allen Stables, Inc, 11-Bruce Treitman, 12-Double JH Stable, Inc., 13-Queen Bee Racing, LLC, 14-Agave Racing Stable

Breeders: 1-Harold Tillema & Pamela Tillema, 2-Haras de La Pomme, 3-Arroyo de Luna, 4-Farfellow Farms Ltd., 5-Scott Gross & Mark Devereaux, 6-Phil Milner & Randy Bloch, 7-Thomas Newton Bell & Ross John McLeod, 8-Lee Searing & Susan Searing, 9-Lynn B. Schiff, 10-Claiborne Farm, 11-Old English Rancho, 12-Wertheimer et Frere, 13-Classic Oaks Farm, 14-DATT Farm, LLC

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LOZA AND ISHAQ MAKING A SPLASH

by Ben Massam

Trainer Efren Loza Jr. endured an unexpected anxious moment in the final furlong of Saturday's Inaugural S. at Tampa Bay Downs. Just when it appeared that his promising 2-year-old **Ishaq** (Harlan's Holiday) was home free with a four-length advantage, the colt took a series of erratic steps in deep stretch and nearly lost the race [[Video](#)].

Fortunately, Ishaq re-engaged after the unprecedented incident and prevailed by a neck over a surging Formal Summation (In Summation), but it was not until after the race that Loza realized something had gone awry with his runner's blinkers.

"I was seeing the race live and I didn't see the blinkers [come loose]--I thought that something went wrong with the horse," recalled Loza. "And after that I saw the blinkers, and the jockey told me that the horse stopped and lost his momentum at the end. When he saw the other horses, he started again and won by a neck. That's just something that happened--an accident."



Ishaq (right) holds off Formal Summation with unfastened blinkers |
Tampa Bay Downs

Although Loza is well acquainted with the twists and turns of racing, he admitted that he had never seen a comparable incident during the running of a race. With more time to digest Ishaq's race after speaking with jockey Pedro Cotto Jr., the 31-year old trainer concluded that the trouble with the blinkers began before the gate opened.

"I talked with the jockey and before the start, the horse jumped a little bit and one of the strips from the blinkers fell off," the trainer explained. "With the wind and the speed of the race, the other part of the blinker came off and the blinkers kept flapping. The last thing was that the blinkers [covered] the eyes of the horse."

Heavily backed as the 3-5 choice in the six-furlong Inaugural after romping by 10 1/4 lengths in his 5 1/2-panel unveiling in Oldsmar Nov. 28 [[Video](#)], Ishaq maintained his unbeaten record, albeit in unorthodox fashion. After the colt emerged from Saturday's test seemingly no worse for the wear, Loza said that his trainee's next start will likely come in Tampa's Pasco S. Jan. 23.

Cont. p14

"We'll run the next race at seven furlongs," the native of Mexico revealed. "We decided to start the horse's career at Tampa because he was very green. We knew he had good talent, and he won pretty good in his first race, and then we just wanted to run the second race on the same track. Now we have the other option of going to seven furlongs [in the Pasco] because we are trying to go two turns, but it's step-by-step."

Given that the Feb. 13 GIII Sam F. Davis S. and the Mar. 12 GII Lambholm South Tampa Bay Derby are the two most lucrative events of the Tampa Bay meet, successfully stretching his soon-to-be sophomore to a route of ground is an intriguing possibility.

"I think he's a horse who can go a distance," Loza continued. "He has good speed, but usually he can run more easily. In [his first two races], the jockey had to rush at the start because we needed good position, but seven furlongs is different. We can break more free and easy."

Loza, who has won at a remarkable 46% rate with first-time starters over the past two years, credits some of his success to a hands-on approach with his horses from day one.

"I break all my babies," he explained. "I take the horses I buy in the sales, and my lead owner [St. George Stable] breeds his own horses and I break [them]. I know all the horses because I put the saddle on them the first time. I usually try to work with every horse differently. Some horses have good speed and some don't, so I just try to run them when they look ready."

Loza, who followed American racing for years via simulcast signals in his native Mexico, said that he fulfilled a long-time dream by coming to America in 2011. The trainer acknowledged that the transition process has been aided by the similar structure of race conditions in both countries, as well as his extensive family ties to the game.

"I took my license when I was 19 years old in Mexico and I trained there for eight years," related Loza, who once aspired to become a jockey if not for his height. "I've been in the horse business for a long time because my father was a trainer for more than 50 years. Now he has turned 70 years old. I always wanted to come here to America, and I had the opportunity to come with a couple of owners that I had in my country."

At the fore of Loza's supporters is German Larrea's St. George Stable, another Mexican-based operation aiming to make a splash on American soil. While Larrea and Loza have become increasingly active at sales, the stable's principle activity remains raising and competing North American homebreds. Loza saddled his first runners donning St. George silks in 2013, and joked that the owner has given him a convenient way of remembering when he arrived in the United States.

"When [Larrea] started his breeding, he named all of his horses starting with the letter 'A' and then with 'B, C, D, E, F, G, H' for eight years," the trainer quipped.

"When I arrived here to America, I started with the letter F. I broke the letter F. It's something crazy, but that's the way."

The most accomplished runner in the Loza barn, MSW & MGSP **Huasca** (Tiz Wonderful), hails from the 'H' crop of St. George homebreds. The trainer noted that the gray filly is getting some much-needed recovery time after a rigorous sophomore campaign that included two stakes victories and a pair of placings in the GIII Miss Preakness S. and GIII Azalea S. Most recently fifth in the GIII Dogwood S. at Churchill Sept. 19, Loza said he is hopeful his charge will return primed for a successful 2016.

"I gave Huasca some time off after the last race at Churchill," Loza said. "I gave her time off because the season for that filly was hard. She ran in [nine races] and we thought we should give her a rest and come back after two to three months in April. It's just been two years, and she now turns to [her 4-year-old season], so she needed a break. She's good."

With the support of a committed owner and a stable full of talented runners like Ishaq and Huasca, the trainer who once dreamt of being a jockey seems likely to continue an upward trajectory. As for Loza's own outlook, he tries to remember his beginnings with his father at the track in Mexico for proper perspective.

"I started like a lot of people who start from zero, like grooms and hotwalkers who go step-by-step," Loza concluded. "If you don't have the right owners and the right horses, it's hard. The horses make the trainers."

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SLIGHT GAINS AT LOS AL MEET

Los Alamitos, which ended its second winter Thoroughbred meet Sunday, saw a 2.3% increase in all-sources handle. The total all-sources handle for the 12-day meet was \$65,710,345 compared to \$64,218,080 last year.

"We're happy," said Brad McKinzie, vice president and general manager of the Los Alamitos Racing Association. "Anytime you can get away with being up a little bit is better than being down. I thought the meet off to a so-so start, but once we ran the [GI] Starlet [Dec. 12] things picked up and we had a huge [GI] Futurity day [Dec. 19]. I thought [racing secretary] Bob Moreno did a great job not only this meet, but all three meets this year. Being able to fill races without a turf course is very impressive to me."

Thoroughbred racing is scheduled to return to Los Alamitos for the track's inaugural spring meet Apr. 14 through May 1. The track's fall meet will run from Sept. 8-Sept. 25 and the winter meet runs from Dec. 8 through Dec. 18.

INDUSTRY INFO

Welfare and Safety Summit Scheduled for June:

The seventh Welfare and Safety of the Racehorse Summit will be held next June 28 at Keeneland, The Jockey Club and Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation announced Monday.

"This year we plan to bring back the summit committee meetings the day after the summit as we have in the past with the first few editions," said Edward L. Bowen, president, Grayson-Jockey Club Research Foundation. "This will help keep ideas fresh and keep committee members focused on initiatives to improve the welfare and safety of our equine and human athletes."

Kentucky

Touch Gold to Old Friends:

Touch Gold (Deputy Minister--Passing Mood, by Buckpasser), who denied Silver Charm the Triple Crown when he won the 1997 GI Belmont S., will join that GI Kentucky Derby and GI Preakness winner at Old Friends, the Thoroughbred retirement facility in Georgetown, Kentucky. The 21-year-old stallion was donated, along with an endowment, by Frank Stronach's Adena Springs. In addition to the Belmont, Touch Gold also won the 1997 GI Haskell Invitational. He is the sire of Grade I winners Seek Gold, Composure, Midas Eyes and Mass Media.

"It's amazing to reunite these two great rivals," Old Friends founder and president Michael Blownen said of Touch Gold and

Silver Charm. "We also now have War Emblem and the horse who ended his Triple Crown Bid, Sarava. It's great to revisit and recount these wonderful racing stories. Our thanks again to Mr. Stronach and everyone at Adena Springs for entrusting us with this amazing horse. We hope all of Touch Gold's fans will come visit him."

California

Rock Me Baby Retired:

Multiple stakes winner and graded stakes placed **Rock Me Baby** (Rock Hard Ten--Barbara Orr, by Tale of the Cat) has been retired from racing. The 6-year-old gelding, who raced for West Point Thoroughbreds, has been adopted by one of the syndicate's partners. "He's such a neat horse who was a pleasure to have in the barn these past three years," said West Point Thoroughbreds president Terry Finley. "He didn't debut until the end of his 3-year-old year, but proved to be worth the wait. "Rocky" took his partners on a fun ride and we owe it to him to retire sound with the ability to move on to a second career." Rock Me Baby won the 2014 California Dreamin' H. and 2015 Albany S. He was second in last year's GI Del Mar Mile H. and retires with seven wins from 24 starts and earnings of \$495,454.

ROOKIES

First-crop starters to watch: Tuesday, December 22

Sire (Sire's Sire), current farm, 2012 Fee, #foals of racing age/Winners/BlackTypeWnrs * Race #-track, race type, distance, runner, odds (if available)

CUSTOM FOR CARLOS (More Than Ready), Clear Creek Stud, \$3K, 50/5/1 3-DED, Msw, 5f, Custom for Chloe, \$80K OBS APR 2yo, 6-1

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IN JAPAN:

Earth Collection, c, 2, **Unbridled's Song**--Aspenglow (SW-US, GSP-US \$465,698), by Lion Hearted. Nakayama , 12-19, Maiden Race, 9fT, Lifetime Record: 1-1-0-0, \$57,851. O-Green Farm; B-Nancy L. Terhune Ernest Frohboese & The Unbridled's Song Syndicate; T-Tomohito Ozeki. *\$80,000 Ylg '14 KEESEP, \$120,000 2YO '15 FTFMAR.

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-Bill Oppenheim



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American-breds cont.

Dashing Blaze, c, 3, [Kitten's Joy](#)--Blazing Bliss, by Honour and Glory. Hanshin , 12-19, Rigel Stakes, 8fT. Lifetime Record: 10-5-2-0, \$701,157 O-Green Fields Inc.; B-Kenneth L. & Sarah Ramsey; T-Keiji Yoshimura. * \$65,000, Ylg, '13 KEESEP. \$400,000 2YO, '14 OBSAPR. **Full to Honor The Kitten SP-US \$174,274.

◆ Purchased by Narwick Int'l / R. Takahashi ◆

IN BRITAIN:

U S Navy Seal, c, 3, [War Front](#). See "Britain."

BREEDERS' EDITION AMERICA

ALLOWANCE RESULTS:

5th-PRX, \$79,700, 12-21, 3yo/up, 1m, 1:39.73, ft.

TRAFFIC LIGHT (g, 6, [Peace Rules](#)--[Lears and Limos](#), by [Hennessy](#)) Lifetime Record: MSW & GSP, 29-10-7-3, \$613,160. O-John Trippi; B-Dixiana Farms LLC (PA); T-Alfredo Velazquez. *\$13,000 Ylg '10 KEESEP. **1/2 to Simply Splendid (Maria's Mon), GSW, \$462,767.

8th-PRX, \$53,000, 12-21, (NW1X), 3yo/up, f/m, 6f, 1:12.82, ft. **ALICE'S GIRLS** (f, 3, [Any Given Saturday](#)--[Jet Away Jane](#) {MSW, \$543, 937}, by [Unbridled Jet](#)) Lifetime Record: 15-3-0-1, \$93,970. O-James A. Shannon Jr.; B-Golden Oak Farm LLC (PA); T-Cynthia G. Reese. *\$40,000 Ylg '13 EASSEP.

8th-DED, \$40,000, (S), 12-21, (NW1X), 3yo/up, f/m, 7 1/2f, 1:35.45, sy.

MIMI'S BELLA ALARM (f, 4, [Sound the Alarm](#)--[Mimi's Boss Sauce](#), by [On the Sauce](#)) Lifetime Record: 14-5-1-1, \$68,235. O-Pearl T. Courville; B-Tu K Farm (LA); T-Samuel Breaux.

4th-FG, \$39,000, (S), (NW2X)/Opt. Clm (\$20,000), 12-21, 3yo/up, 1m (off turf), 1:39.41, sy.

TRUE FLAT (g, 5, [Flatter](#)--[True Blonde Beauty](#), by [Proudest Romeo](#)) Lifetime Record: 20-6-2-3, \$136,825. O/T-Steve Ingram; B-Bryant H. Prentice III & Steve Ingram (LA). *1/2 to Beauty's Pioneer (Pioneering), MSP, \$297,887.

6th-FG, \$38,000, (S), (NW1X)/Opt. Clm (\$12,500), 12-21, 3yo/up, f/m, 1m (off turf), 1:42.28, sy.

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN (f, 3, [Any Given Saturday](#)--[Night Diamond](#), by [Valid Expectations](#)) Lifetime Record: 10-3-2-1, \$66,785. O-Oakwood Stables LLC; B-Tigertail Ranch (LA); T-Andrew T. Ney.

1st-MVR, \$26,700, (S), 12-21, (NW2X), 3yo/up, f/m, 1m, 1:46.20, my.

U ROCK ROBIN (f, 3, [Stephen Got Even](#)--[Mrs. Debbie M](#) {MSP}, by [War Chant](#)) Lifetime Record: SP, 6-3-1-0, \$60,330. O-Susan King; B-Susan King (OH); T-William D. Cowans.

4th-MVR, \$26,700, (S), 12-21, (NW2X), 3yo/up, 1m, 1:45.90, my.

DAVE BABY (g, 5, [It's No Joke](#)--[Chubbs Last Call](#), by [Dixieland Heat](#)) Lifetime Record: 19-3-2-5, \$65,580. O/B-Robert C Bennett (OH); T-Robbie Rowe.

3rd-TUP, \$22,500, 12-21, 3yo/up, 1m, 1:37.28, ft.

GENTLE AS A BREEZE (g, 5, [Wilko](#)--[Savoury Soup](#), by [Alphabet Soup](#)) Lifetime Record: 49-14-14-3, \$189,279. O-Seven Arms Stable; B-Bob Walton (FL); T-David Van Winkle.

ADDITIONAL MAIDEN WINNERS:

Sunnyonastormyday, g, 2, [Storm and a Half](#)--Winloc's Sunshine, by Distinctive Pro. DED, 12-21, (S), 5f, :59.68. B-Mitch Bailey (LA). *\$9,500 Ylg '14 TEXOCT.

Gospel Gail, f, 3, [Bandini](#)--Possesting, by Posse. DED, 12-21, 6 1/2f, 1:22.06. B-University of Kentucky (KY). *\$2,200 Ylg '13 FTKFEB.



Congratulations to last week's [JockeyTalk360.com](#) Jockey of the Week Ashley Broussard, who won the first stakes race of her career Friday night at Delta Downs and quickly doubled her stakes tally at the track Saturday.

UPCOMING MAJOR NORTH AMERICAN STAKES

Date	Race	Track
12/26	GI La Brea S.	SA
	GI Malibu S.	SA
	GII Mathis Brothers Mile	SA
	GIII Daytona S.	SA
	GIII La Prevoyante H.	GP
	GIII Sugar Swirl S.	GP
	GIII W.L. McKnight H.	GP
	GII San Gabriel S.	SA
1/2	GII Santa Ynez S.	SA
	GIII Hutcheson S.	GP
	GIII Old Hat S.	GP
	GIII Dania Beach S.	GP
	GIII Jerome S.	AQU

PERENNIAL CHAMPION HUNGRY FOR MORE

By Daithí Harvey

As 2015 draws to a close it sees Pat Smullen crowned champion jockey in Ireland for the eighth time. He was Ireland's champion for the first time in the year 2000 and, since landing his third title in 2005, he has either been first or second in the Irish jockeys table every year since. Given this impressive resume spanning the last 15 years, one could be forgiven for thinking Smullen is approaching the twilight of his career. However, at only 38 years of age, he's far from it. Smullen is very much in his prime for a flat jockey and the fact that he has

achieved so much and established himself as one of the most respected jockeys in the world is testament to his dedication, professionalism and sheer talent.

Smullen's career has charted a fairly straightforward course. An apprenticeship with Tom Lacey, a fellow county Offaly native, was followed by a stint as second jockey for John Oxx but it was his next career move that proved the most significant turning point in his professional life. Mick Kinane had just made the move to Ballydoyle and there was an opening as stable



Pat Smullen accepting his 8th Champion Jockey Award at the recent HRI Awards | *Racing Post*

jockey to the famed Rosewell House trainer Dermot Weld. Smullen had landed his maiden Group 1 victory aboard the Tommy Stack trained Tarascon (Ire) (Tirol {GB}) in the Moyglare Stud S. at The Curragh in 1997 and Weld was sufficiently impressed with the then 21-year-old to offer him the job. Smullen didn't hesitate in accepting and the partnership has developed into one of the most longstanding alliances in racing. In typically modest fashion Smullen says he was in the "right place at the right time" but it didn't faze him in the slightest to be taking over from one of the finest jockeys ever to steer a horse. "Mick Kinane was someone I considered an idol and a role model and I still do. I was obviously thrilled to get the job and I grasped the opportunity with both hands." **Cont. p3**

ULTIMATE ACCOLADE FOR MCCOY

AP McCoy, the recently retired, record shattering jump jockey was back in the spotlight on Sunday when he scooped the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' at the BBC Sports Personality of the Year ceremony in Belfast. 41-year-old McCoy, born and reared in County Antrim in Northern Ireland, retired back in May having been champion jockey in Britain for each one of the twenty seasons he rode there. In total he rode 4,357 winners including all the major races a jump jockey wants to win including an Aintree Grand National and two Cheltenham Gold Cups.

He became the first jockey to win the BBC Sports Personality of the year award in 2010 and when you consider the sheer longevity of his career at the pinnacle of his sport this latest accolade was tailor made for McCoy. **Cont. p4**

in **TDN America** today...

NTRA SAFETY & INTEGRITY ALLIANCE

Lucas Marquardt spends 36 hours with the NTRA Safety and Integrity Alliance and reports back on what the alliance, formed in the wake of Eight Belles's tragic breakdown, is doing to enhance the safety of the sports' equine and human stars.

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2015 LEADING EUROPEAN FIRST CROP SIRES (IN ORDER OF WORLDWIDE WINNERS)

STALLION	WNRS	SWs	TOTAL
1 Canford Cliffs	34	3	€657,234
2 Zoffany	31	5	€1,065,449
3 Lilbourne Lad	25	0	€338,081
4 Frozen Power	22	0	€254,135

Hyperion Promotions, 20/12/15

2015 yearlings sold for **€340,000, €285,000, €280,000, €255,000, €200,000, €170,000 etc.**

COOLMORE

PERENNIAL CHAMPION HUNGRY FOR MORE

(cont. from p1)

The Weld/Smullen axis did not have to wait too long to taste victory at the top level together and it came in 2001 via Vinnie Roe (Ire) (Definite Article {GB}) in the G1 Irish St. Leger, the first of an historic four victories the same jockey/trainer/horse combination would register in the Irish Classic.

"Vinnie Roe was a brilliant horse for me as it was important to have a flagship horse in the early stages of the job, and we had some fantastic days with him," said Smullen.

Further Group 1 and Classic victories would follow, including Refuse To Bend (Sadler's Wells) in the G1 2000 Guineas at Newmarket in 2003 and Grey Swallow (Ire) (Daylami {Ire}) in the G1 Irish Derby in 2004. You could say one got away in 2005 when Saoire (GB) (Pivotal {GB}), trained by his wife Frances Crowley won the G1 Irish 1000 Guineas with Mick Kinane in the saddle. Smullen was claimed to ride the fourth placed Utterly Heaven (Ire) for his boss but his disappointment was very short-lived as he says, "It was a great achievement by Frances, it was just a pity I wasn't more involved!"

Smullen didn't have to wait too long to set the record straight, winning the race the following year on the Weld trained Nightime (Ire) (Galileo {Ire}). Though he wasn't the best horse he rode, one of Smullen's favorite horses is Famous Name (GB) (Dansili {GB}). Over a five year period Smullen rode the horse in 37 of his 38 starts winning on 21 occasions with 20 of those victories coming in stakes races. "He was an absolute pleasure to ride. He was so consistent, not just in his races but also in his work, he never, ever worked badly and he was so sound and had an amazing constitution," recalled Smullen. "If his offspring can inherit these traits from him they will certainly be racehorses."

We will have a better idea of that in four month's time when his first 2-year-olds start hitting the track.

Fast forward to the present and Smullen can look back on 2015 with pride. He would have been surprised had someone told him in the spring that he would ride a Classic winner for Hugo Palmer. He did just that and added another Group 1 for good measure. His linkup with Palmer traces back to last year when he won on Short Squeeze (Ire) (Cape Cross {Ire}) at York at the 2014 Ebor Festival, but explaining his call up for Covert Love (Ire) (Azamour {Ire}) Smullen said, "I'm friends with her co-breeder Mark McStay and he asked me if I wasn't required by the boss in the G1 Darley Irish Oaks if I could ride Covert Love. I

was very happy to take the ride and quite pleasantly surprised with the outcome. She's a great big rangy filly, she continued to improve throughout the season and she will be major force in all those middle distance fillies' races next year." Fascinating Rock's (Ire) (Fastnet Rock {Aus}) win in the G1 Qipco Champion S. at Ascot may have come as a surprise to some but not to Smullen. "I always thought he was capable of a performance like that. Remember, we ran him in the Epsom Derby, we thought he was good enough to run and run well in it, it just didn't work out on the day. Also when you think of his run in the G1 Tattersalls Gold Cup in May, just beaten by Al Kazeem (GB) (Dubawi {Ire}) with Postponed (Ire) (Dubawi {Ire}) in third; that's top class form. Everything came together perfectly for him at Ascot, the ground, the trip, the pace, it was just one of those great days." Dubai is a possible reappearance plan for the Newtown Stud homebred but only a possible as Smullen admits, "It's a long year and he does like a bit of cut in the ground."

However, pride of place for 2015 and possibly his career in the saddle to date goes to Free Eagle (Ire) (High Chaparral {Ire}).

"In my opinion, he is the most talented horse I have ridden,

and what happened in the G1 Irish Champion S. will haunt me for a while." Strong words from Smullen and though he does not want to dwell on the 'what might have beens', he feels the bump Free Eagle received off Golden Horn (GB) (Cape Cross {Ire}) in the Leopardstown race, not only cost him any chance of winning, but he also thinks the horse never fully recovered from the incident. "He just didn't feel like the same horse in his next two starts, but he was certainly one of the best if not the best horse I have sat on.

It's a pity his racing career tapered off a bit but I think he will make a great sire and I look forward to sending him one of my own mares."

That last statement offers a glimpse of what path Smullen's life is likely to take when he eventually hangs up his saddle. Along with his wife Frances and three children Smullen has been quietly building up their Brickfield Stud, currently just over 50 acres and hopefully growing. "It's something both myself and Frances have a great interest in, although it's Frances' department at the moment. It's definitely what I will concentrate on when I give up riding, though I hope that's still a long way off. I don't have any real interest in training. We have a few mares already including Saying Grace (Ire) (Brief Truce) whose progeny have done well both in the sales ring and on the racecourse so far."



Pat Smullen celebrates victory aboard Fascinating Rock in the G1 Qipco Champion S. | *Racing Post*



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In the short term, though, Smullen still has some unfinished business in the saddle. Being champion jockey in Ireland is an on-going ambition, so too is spreading his wings abroad a bit further.

"I think a lot of the hard work I've put in over the years is starting to pay off and some of the major races I won this year seemed to have opened up a few more doors for me," he said. "Riding in these high profile international Group 1 races is definitely what I want to focus on more, saying that, being champion jockey at home is also very important to me."

Having experienced his fair share of international racing so far Smullen is in a good position to compare standards around the world and offering his opinion. He said, "Japan is a country I would like to ride in some more. They have a wonderful structure, prize-money is brilliant and the racing is well policed with a high emphasis on integrity. A lot of other jurisdictions could certainly take a leaf out of their book. I've gone there on numerous occasions, for the jockeys challenge and the Japan Cup and each time I've left very impressed with the whole setup, so doing a longer stint there at some stage is something that definitely interests me."

This winter Smullen intends to take a break from riding in January with a view to starting out again in February in Dubai. Christmas with the family, a holiday in Tenerife and some farming therapy should help recharge the batteries and leave this ultimate professional in good shape to do what he does best in 2016, riding winners.

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ULTIMATE ACCOLADE FOR MCCOY (cont. from p1)



AP McCoy with children Archie & Eve & wife Chanelle on the day he retired from riding | *Racing Post*

Famed for his iron will and constitution McCoy appeared humbled by his award and following the presentation from fellow countryman and golfer Rory McIlroy, he said, "Can I just say what an honor and privilege it is to receive such a prestigious award, especially here in Belfast. Being from Northern Ireland, a place that has produced so many talented and successful sports people - none more so than the fellow on my right (McIlroy) - it makes tonight even more special. Racing is a wonderful sport, I was very lucky to live my life as a jockey through it, and for that I

will be for ever grateful."

McCoy continued, "There are so many people I would like to thank--I rode in nearly 18,000 races and I would like to thank the horses I was able to ride in those, because without them this wouldn't be possible. I would like to thank the stable lads and lasses, who looked after them so well, they look after them better than you would ever believe."

"To the BBC for this, because this is amazing. And finally to any young people watching tonight's show, or who are here this evening, all I can say is 'make the sacrifices, because it is worth it'. Thank you very much."

Thank you very much AP McCoy, you have been a fantastic ambassador for racing and you will continue to be so through your various media and charitable roles.

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PUNCHESTOWN SET FOR FACE LIFT

Major plans are afoot in Punchestown Racecourse and following the 2016 National Hunt Festival next May work will commence on a €6.2m upgrade to facilities. Grant aid of €2.5m has been approved by the board of Horse Racing Ireland and earmarked first for redevelopment is the old grandstand area by the final fence, which will see the new site incorporating a dedicated owners and trainers lounge, a public bar, a champagne bar, additional toilets and improved betting facilities. Phase two of the development is scheduled to begin after the 2017 festival and will involve rebuilding the above mentioned grandstand from scratch and incorporating different viewing and hospitality areas. Dick O'Sullivan, General Manager



Punchestown Manager Dick O'Sullivan | *Racing Post*

of Punchestown Racecourse, said, "Punchestown is the home of Irish jump racing and we are conscious that the venue must live up to such a title. Through hard work and a dedicated team, we have continued to develop and grow the Irish National Hunt Festival despite some difficult years.

The customer experience is paramount to maintain and grow attendances and now is the time to upgrade our facilities. With the support of our trustees, Kildare Hunt Club, sponsors, Horse Racing Ireland and of course our loyal customers we look forward with confidence to improving the facilities at Punchestown." Horse Racing Ireland's Chief Executive Brian Kavanagh added, "This is the third largest amount of grant aid allocated to a racecourse under HRI's current capital development programme and I am delighted that

Punchestown's financial position has improved so significantly that they are now in a position to progress such a major schedule of works over the next two years."

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WINNERS BY EUROPEAN SIRES

IN JAPAN:

Virginia, m, 5, [Galileo \(Ire\)](#)--Silverskaya (MGSW-Fr \$142,550), by Silver Hawk. Chukyo, 12-19, Chukyo Nikkei Sho, 8fT. Lifetime Record: 17-3-2-2, \$391,983 O-G1 Racing; B-Northern Farm; T-Manabu Ikezoe. * Full to Seville G1SW-Aus, G1SP-GB/Ire/Fr \$1,188,759.

Tip Top, f, 4, [Dubawi \(Ire\)](#)--Adonita, by Singspiel. Chukyo, 12-20, Alw, 6f, Lifetime Record: 17-3-0-3, \$274,463 O-H.H.Sheikh Mohammed; B-Darley Japan Farm; T-Teruhiko Chida.

BRITAIN

 results
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Monday's Results:

4th-CHD, £45,000, Alw, 12-21, 3yo/up, 7f (AWT), 1:23.81, ft. **COLD AS ICE (SAF)** (f, 4, [Western Winter](#)--[Viva {SAf}](#) {GSAW-SAf}, by [National Assembly](#)) was runner-up in Kenilworth's Jan. 31 G1 Majorca S. and ran fourth contesting a conditions heat at Wolverhampton on European debut in her only subsequent start last time Nov. 27, and led after the initial strides here. Dominating until coming under pressure once into the stretch run, the 15-8 favorite kept in strongly for continued urging to prevail by 3/4 of a length from Realize (GB) (Zafeen {Fr}). Cold As Ice's siblings include the 2-year-old Live Life (SAF) (Trippi) and a yearling filly by Var. Sales history: R875,000 Ylg '13 CAPPRI. Lifetime Record: MGSW & G1SP-SAf, 9-6-2-0, \$121,145. [Video, sponsored by Fasig-Tipton](#). O-Mrs K Finch & Mrs B Kieswetter; B-Avontuur Thoroughbred Farm (SAF); T-William Haggas.

1st-CHD, £19,000, Mdn, 12-21, 2yo, 8f (AWT), 1:38.52, ft. **CAPE SPEED (FR)** (c, 2, [Cape Cross {Ire}](#)--[At a Great Rate](#), by [Arch](#)), a first-up fifth at Ayr last time June 20, bounced out of the inside gate to claim an early lead in this one. Stoked up when pressured at the top of the lane, the 12-1 chance refused to buckle under a final-furlong drive and kept on resolutely to hold Dwight D (GB) (Duke of Marmalade {Ire}) by a neck. The 47,000gns TAOCT yearling's third dam is Niarchos lynchpin Coup de Genie (Mr. Prospector) and he is therefore related to a slew of top-level performers including Machiavellian, Denebola, Bago (Fr), Maxios (GB), et al. Lifetime Record: 2-1-0-0, \$18,309.

[Video, sponsored by Fasig-Tipton](#).

O-Kingsley Park 3 - Originals; B-Famille Niarchos (FR); T-Mark Johnston.

ADDITIONAL MAIDEN WINNERS:

Krystallite (GB), f, 2, [Kheleyf](#)--Chrystal Venture (Ire), by Barathea (Ire). WOL, 12-21, 5f 20y (AWT), 1:00.83. B-Paul Dixon & Crystal Maze Partnership (GB).

U S Navy Seal, c, 3, [War Front](#)--Questress, by Seeking the Gold. CHD, 12-21, 10f (AWT), 2:04.56. B-Shell Bloodstock (KY). *\$800,000 Wlg '12 KEENOV; 14,000gns 3yo '15 TA15. **1/2 to Pomeroy (Boundary), MGISW-US, \$845,050; and Athens (Giant's Causeway), SP-US, \$126,390.

FRANCE

 results
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Monday's Result:

1st-DVL, €21,000, Alw, 12-21, 4yo/up, 7 1/2f (AWT), 1:29.71, ft. **QUIXOTE (GER)** (h, 5, [Pivotal {GB}](#)--[Quebrada {Ire}](#) {Hwt. 2yo Filly-Ger, Hwt. Older Mare-Ger at 7-9.5f, MGSAW-Ger, \$543,772}, by Devil's Bag) Lifetime Record: SW-Ger, 16-4-3-1, €51,600. O-Klaus Allofs & Stiftung Gestut Fahrhof; B-Stiftung Gestut Fahrhof (GER); T-Simon Stokes. *€130,000 RNA Ylg '11 TAOCT. **1/2 to Quilanga (Ger) (Lomitas {GB}), GSW-Fr, SW-Ity & GSP-Ger, \$125,615; and Quinindo (Ger) (Monsun {Ger}), SW & GSP-Ger, \$124,354.

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