

## A DIABETES DRUG'S OUTSIZED, CONTESTED ROLE IN HORSE RACING'S ANTI-DOPING CRUSADE



**Mike Lauer** | *Coady*

*by T.D. Thornton*

Trainer Mike Lauer is now a month past serving what he believes was an unjust 75-day suspension because a Thoroughbred under his care at Horseshoe Indianapolis tested positive last summer for metformin, a drug used to treat diabetes in people. With more 20 million patients taking it, metformin ranks as the nation's third-most-prescribed human medicine, according to the consumer healthcare website Healthgrades.

Before Lauer's case made it to an official arbitration hearing, the 72-year-old conditioner with five decades of licensure was able to present enough evidence to the Horseracing Integrity and Welfare Unit (HIWU) for the agency to conclude that the likely source of the metformin was "unintentional contamination" by a groom who had ingested his doctor-ordered blood sugar-regulating tablet at lunch, then touched the mouth of Mowins (Mohaymen) while fitting the gelding with a bit and bridle for an Aug. 5 race.

*Cont. p3*

## LOTHENBACH DISPERSAL A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR BUYERS *by Jessica Martini*

This year's renewal of the Fasig-Tipton Winter Mixed Sale will have extra appeal to buyers with the addition of the dispersal of the late Robert Lothenbach's breeding stock. The dispersal's offerings, most of whom were supplemented to the auction's catalogue, will be handled by Vinery Sales and Taylor Made Sales Agency. Both consignors emphasized what a unique opportunity the dispersal represented.

"Mr. Lothenbach was a great ambassador for racing and he strictly bred to race," Vinery's Derek MacKenzie said. "He also bought a lot of nice yearlings over the years for racing. And so, none of these families--especially some that go back three and four generations--have ever been on the market. There is soundness and plenty of talent within these families. Under unfortunate circumstances, they are available to the public."


*Cont. p11*

## IN TDN EUROPE TODAY

### JAPAN RULES AS THE JRA TURNS 70

The popularity and prowess of the Japanese Thoroughbred has never been higher as the Japanese Racing Association (JRA) celebrates its 70th year of operation. Emma Berry has the story.

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**Wednesday, January 31, 2024**



*The gold trophy that will go to the winner of the upcoming 150th GI Kentucky Derby was unveiled to the public Tuesday at Churchill Downs. See page 17. | Horsephotos*

## ZEDAN STICKING WITH BAFFERT DESPITE DERBY BAN

**12**

*Amr Zedan, who owns several top 3-year-old colts, has informed TDN that his horses are staying with trainer Bob Baffert, which means they will be ineligible to run in the GI Kentucky Derby.*

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**Mike Lauer, cont. from p1**

But even though that negotiated HIWU resolution stated that "Mr. Lauer's degree of fault is in the light range" and that he "fulfilled his personal responsibility to be knowledgeable of the Anti-Doping and Medication Control Program and to inform all personnel associated with the care, treatment, training, or racing of his Covered Horses," the evidence was only enough to reduce—not eliminate—Lauer's potential penalties of a two-year suspension and \$25,000 fine, which are HIWU's standard sanctions for banned substances.

The "banned" category is the most serious class of drug offences under Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act (HISA) rules. Those substances are considered the most harmful and egregious, and are never supposed to show up in tests on any covered Thoroughbred.

Lauer and his wife, Penny, detailed to *TDN* how they spent \$45,838 over a five-month span trying to clear Lauer's name and keep his training business afloat while fighting the ruling, which ended up with a \$2,600 fine in addition to the 2 1/2-month suspension.

But, the Lauers said, they can't calculate the direct costs of the logistical headaches they endured while trying to temporarily disperse a 50-horse racing stable among five new trainers for the time that Mike was ineligible to compete.

Nor, the Lauers added, does the financial outlay take into account the lost income from Mike's being unable to ply his trade, purse money from two of Mowins's races that had to be forfeited, or the credibility blow the ruling inflicted upon the outfit's reputation.

They also aren't sure that their groom was even the correct source of the metformin positive, even though the groom came forward and volunteered the timetable of events that Mike Lauer agreed to when signing his "case resolution without a hearing/final decision" document.

Lauer told HIWU investigators that he, too, takes metformin as prescribed by a doctor, although he said he had not touched Mowins anywhere near the gelding's face in the week before the positive test. The Lauers also said they paid \$1,100 to have testing done on the Shelbyville, Indiana water source that supplies the track's stable area, and it revealed traces of metformin.

As a trainer since 1976 with an 11.7% win rate from 9,988 starts that is not suggestive of performance-enhancing drug use, Lauer's stock in 2023 was spread across three divisions stabled in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana, and his entrants ranged from a horse who ran third in the GI Man o' War S. at Belmont Park to lower-end claimers who routinely competed at Belterra Park.

**Cont.**

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### Mike Lauer, cont.

Lauer has only three previous medication violations listed against him on The Jockey Club's online rulings database. All were for penalty category C (the lowest level of severity) infractions that occurred in races in 2009 and 2018 (twice). They resulted in fines of \$250, \$1,000, and \$1,500 as per then-in-effect racing commission standards in Kentucky and Indiana, plus a 10-day suspension for the latter positive because it was his second violation within a one-year period.

Lauer said he's doing the best he can to put HIWU's bureaucratic rodeo behind him while focusing forward now that he's permitted to train again. But it seems every time he tries to clear his mind of the ordeal, some little reminder of it pops up to skewer him anew.

Like a couple weeks back when Lauer was attending a horse auction, and an industry acquaintance approached him and said by way of greeting, "Well, I see they caught ya!"

Lauer ignored the wiseguy's remark. Still, the stigma of it stung.

"You get little cracks like that," Lauer said. "But we lost clients. We lost a ton of money, and I mean a ton. And we went through a ton of aggravation. My life's not back to normal, and I don't know when it will be."

Penny Lauer, a part-owner of Mowins, the gelding whose urinalysis came back positive for metformin after he ran third at 21-1 odds in an allowance sprint, put it this way:

"Just the fact that Mike's name was plastered all over having a positive test, people take that info and run with it. Everybody thinks you're cheating. We had to change so many things [for horses owned by Penny and other longtime clients] to be able to run, and pay people that we wouldn't normally had to pay if Mike was able [to train]. We did nothing wrong, yet took a big hit for it. Metformin is not cheating. We didn't put it there. It was just there." **Cont.**



Mowins | Coady

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**Mike Lauer, cont.**

Penny Lauer continued: "There are so many people that touch and care for a horse every day, and even more people on a race day, that a trainer, no matter how much care you take with safe protocol, it is impossible to even know what you come into contact with.

"If you want to believe what HIWU laid out regarding the probability of where this metformin came from, we are talking about possibly a dusting from a pill, on the hands of the groom that transferred it to the bit that the groom put in the horse's mouth, and the horse eventually peed out, and [was] not [detected in tests of] blood," Penny Lauer said.

"And you think this actually made a difference in the performance of this horse?" Penny Lauer asked rhetorically. "Ridiculous!"

And confusing. The Lauers said that even after hiring an attorney and having their own back-and-forths with HIWU, plus a pre-conference call with an arbitrator, and after speaking to scores of veterinarians, stewards, and racing commission officials in an effort to seek supporting information to bolster their case, they still don't have a clear understanding of why metformin is considered a purported performance-enhancer.

Nor do the Lauers know why the diabetes drug's presence in a horse carries such draconian penalties.

They also said they have no clue as to why the five positive tests for metformin since HIWU took over the sport's drug testing in May 2023 have resulted in widely varying outcomes.

In October, two trainers--Javier Morzan of the mid-Atlantic region and the New Mexico-based Guadalupe Munoz, Jr.--had metformin charges against them withdrawn after an internal HIWU review of its six accredited laboratories discovered different limits of detection in blood for metformin, a problem that HIWU officials said has since rectified by harmonizing those detection values across all labs.

In November, Angel J. Castillo Sanchez, a conditioner based in the mid-Atlantic, resolved a metformin positive in one of his trainees by signing an "admission of rule violation and acceptance of consequences" agreement with HIWU that resulted in an 18-month suspension and \$12,500 fine.

In December, Anthony Farrior, the leading trainer at Charles Town, had charges from a metformin positive triggered at Laurel Park dropped. He had requested testing of the split sample, but HIWU determined the specimen's volume was "insufficient for analysis," so the complaint was withdrawn.

Another metformin positive from June has yet to be resolved by HIWU. Trainer Jonathan Wong remains under provisional suspension in a case involving a test from a maiden-breaking filly at Indiana Grand. **Cont.**

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**Mike Lauer, cont.**

Wong, too, faces up to a two-year suspension and a \$25,000 fine. He has publicly disclosed that he has a valid metformin prescription to control his own diabetes. Despite being out of work since July 2 while his case makes its way through the system, Wong **told TDN back in August** he had "zero problems" with the concept of HISA, and that its oversight was "much needed."

But, added Wong, "when you're completely not awarded any opportunities from day one until your hearing, that's pretty much being charged as guilty until proven innocent. I feel like I've been locked up and had the key thrown away."

**Perspective is Everything**

Widening the lens, the metformin positives can be grouped into a broader issue that involves other drugs ingested by people whose residues sometimes show up in equine drug tests. Some of those substances, like methamphetamines and cocaine, are drugs of human abuse with a low likelihood of having been intentionally administered to enhance a horse's performance. But because of their illegal and dangerous nature, they are in the "banned" category.

For example, there are currently five pending methamphetamine violations awaiting adjudication by HIWU. Five others have already been ruled upon, all from horses in the stable of Prairie Meadows trainer Dick Clark, who admitted the violations and accepted the consequences of being ruled off for 90 months and a \$62,500 fine, the largest penalties on record since the inception of HIWU.

Lauer told *TDN* he believes HIWU is going after easier human-drug contamination targets rather than rooting out true horse dopers. His belief is that anxiety over getting caught for something that is essentially out of one's control is causing innocent horse trainers to get out of the business.

"I wish HIWU would catch somebody," Lauer said. "All they're catching is [the equivalent of] parking tickets. That's all they're passing out, and they're just crucifying trainers for things like metformin and meth."

*TDN* emailed Lisa Lazarus, the chief executive officer for the HISA Authority, asking if she'd answer several overarching questions: Is this the way HIWU and HISA are really supposed to work? Are the Authority and HIWU comfortable with the idea that trainers--even some who were initially supportive of HISA--are expressing legitimate fear over getting their lives derailed by accidental contaminations?

Lazarus agreed to a phone interview to discuss the situation. Over the course of about 35 minutes one morning last week, she gave her perspectives on metformin, inadvertent contamination cases, and the evolution of her agency.

Opponents of HISA might not like some of what she said. But give Lazarus credit: This sort of back-and-forth dialogue about real-life concerns over medication control policies had been notoriously difficult for *TDN* (and other media outlets) to engage in with racing commission personnel prior to HIWU's advent, back when those agencies controlled the nation's drug testing under state-by-state rules.

(Disclaimer: Because Lauer opted not to give permission for Lazarus to speak to *TDN* about any aspects of his case that haven't already been made public via HISA and HIWU documents, Lazarus was unable to go too deeply into specifics about Lauer's negotiated settlement.)

And before Lazarus would tackle any general questions, she wanted to get a few points on the record for perspective and background. She asserted that HISA and HIWU are not tone-deaf to industry complaints, and she said there is evidence to show that the agencies have been **proposing new policies** when they realize the original ones aren't working the way they were intended to.

Those changes, Lazarus said, have included altering how provisional suspensions for likely inadvertent contaminations get reported, providing ombudsman assistance and pro-bono legal resources for trainers who can't afford to hire a lawyer, and a renewed focus on getting racetracks to clean up receiving barns and other common areas where horses might be subject to environmental contamination.

Lazarus also stressed that while catching alleged cheaters and keeping them from getting an illegal edge is a main concern for HISA and HIWU, the agencies are also mandated to focus on horse welfare, which drives some of the reasoning on how substances that are generally considered human drugs of abuse are handled. **Cont.**



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**Mike Lauer, cont.**

"Somebody who's on meth shouldn't be walking a 1,200-pound animal around the backside," Lazarus said, underscoring the obvious safety hazard that scenario presents.

"Horses shouldn't have to be exposed to drugs that the trainers and grooms are taking," Lazarus explained. "There should be some degree of care, even if it's not obviously anywhere near the culpability of an intentional administration to get a performance advantage.

"Trainers tell me all the time that they treat their horses better than they treat their children," Lazarus said. "Well, you wouldn't let your child be exposed to meth. And so it's a professionalization that we're trying to achieve and we think is important."

Lazarus continued: "I don't doubt that you have trainers that share with you the concerns that you've raised. And we try to be really responsive to those and to show empathy and engage, and where we need to make changes, we do.

"But I've also had so many trainers call me and say that for the first time, they feel like they have a chance when they compete, that they don't feel like they have to use substances or compete with somebody else's pharmacy," Lazarus said.

"I've also heard anecdotally that there are a number of horsemen that had artificially high win percentages that have now been normalized," Lazarus said.

"The most objective thing in the universe, in my view, is you take a sample from the horse, it goes to the lab, and it comes back positive or negative," Lazarus said, defending HIWU's methodology.

"There's no subjectivity in that. There's no judgment. We can only be governed by that," Lazarus said. "Otherwise you get into this--what I think was a problem with the state racing commissions--'Who's a good guy/who's a bad guy? He had a clean record/He didn't have a clean record.'

"We can't operate like that, because you lose all credibility," Lazarus said. "You're not objective. One of the best things about HIWU is that they're a totally objective organization. They don't have local relationships. They don't know, most of the time, who these trainers are. The sample, the positive test, is always adjudicated the same way."

**The Fault Continuum**

Still, Lazarus said, HISA and HIWU have recognized that changes are needed with regard to human-drug positives that are likely caused by contamination, and she said the agencies

have responded by proposing fault-based rule changes that are expected to be approved by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). At the same time, Lazarus added, HIWU is holding off on adjudicating exposure cases for human drugs of abuse until the FTC makes a decision on the proposed rule tweaks.

"In that sense, trainers have been able to benefit from what we expect to be these new relaxed rules without having to wait for the FTC to approve them," Lazarus said. "We're going to continue to try to bring in ideas like that, to

lessen the burden [on trainers] and to help us really identify what needs to be addressed and to take care of what doesn't need to be addressed...

"Our new system is all about fault," Lazarus continued at a different point in the interview. "And when you have a high degree of fault, you'll have a higher penalty. When you have a low degree of fault you'll have a much lower penalty."

But while those changes will, in theory, mitigate positive tests from illegal street drugs like methamphetamines and cocaine, the new standards won't apply to a commonly prescribed diabetes pill like metformin.

Why not?

"We look at [metformin] as a potential risk, so we don't put it in that category," Lazarus said. "We do have intelligence that metformin is being used intentionally to enhance performance."



Bill Denver/Equi-Photo



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**Mike Lauer, cont.**

HISA and HIWU aren't obligated to disclose the exact nature of such intelligence. That would be akin to handing over their enforcement playbook to alleged dopers, the reasoning goes.

When asked specifically what metformin might do to make a horse run faster, Lazarus said she believed it might be able to improve endurance. She later had a HISA staffer email supporting information that stated metformin "does impact glucose metabolism, so it could have an effect on overall performance."

Those views aren't widely shared by everybody, though, and published research on metformin's alleged role as a performance-enhancer (in either humans or horses) is not definitive.

In human athletics, metformin is not prohibited by either the World Anti-Doping Agency or the United States Anti-Doping Agency. Anecdotally, some bodybuilders take it because they believe it helps them appear more "cut" in terms of reduced body fat, which has led to misperceptions that it can build muscle. Other broad claims contend that metformin can reduce inflammation or provide anti-aging benefits in people.

In U.S. horse racing, metformin has been listed as a Class 2/Penalty Category B drug under the Association of Racing Commissioners International (ARCI) classification system since 2018.

A mid-level designation, Class 2 drugs are defined by ARCI as substances "that have a high potential to affect performance, but less of a potential than drugs in Class 1. These drugs are 1) not generally accepted as therapeutic agents in racing horses, or 2) they are therapeutic agents that have a high potential for abuse."

But are the positive tests for metformin being triggered more by coincidental contaminations or by intentional administrations?

The winter 2023-24 issue of *The Horsemen's Journal* contained a **"Fact or Fiction"** article that touched on veterinary perspectives of the five recent HIWU positives for metformin.

The article stated that "Metformin is so ubiquitous in the environment that it can be found in drinking water whenever it is looked for, including at the racetrack [Horseshoe Indianapolis]

where two of the violations were found. Metformin use is so common in humans that many studies have been conducted to determine if it has an effect on athletic performance, and the overall conclusion of those studies is that the only measurable effect is increased perception of exertion. This effect would detract from performance rather than enhance it."

Lazarus said that HIWU's methodologies for metformin testing are designed to screen out accidental contaminations and to differentiate them from intentional administration.

"I'm not saying that every horse that tests positive for metformin is an intentional abuse," Lazarus explained.

"Obviously, there are very innocent explanations, and there are explanations where that fault continuum should be in the [trainer's] favor. I'm just saying that there are situations where it is being used to enhance performance, and that's where we have to be more careful about it than we might have to with meth or cocaine..."

"The level at which the laboratories have agreed to call metformin a positive, in their view, sort of rules out inadvertent exposures," Lazarus said. "It doesn't necessarily rule

out someone putting their hand in the horse's mouth after they take metformin. But it's intended to really limit it to either a gross negligence or an intentional situation..."

"Mr. Lauer's [test on Mowins] wasn't one of them, because it was obviously above [the limit for a positive]," Lazarus said.

Lazarus dismissed the contention that metformin in a water supply can cause a violation.

"It's not possible to get a positive test through metformin in the water," Lazarus said. "The [testing] level that we have excludes the possibility."

That's why achieving harmonization on testing levels at laboratories is so crucial for HISA and HIWU, Lazarus said.

"We're harmonized on more than 300 [substance levels] right now," Lazarus said. "But obviously, some substances that are prohibited have never been detected. So they have to be detected first for the labs to agree on a level of detection. So there is some degree of that that is always going to be ongoing, as science tries to catch up with the very small percentage of the industry than might be trying to use substances nefariously for gain. There's always a risk that those folks are sometimes a little bit ahead of the labs... **Cont.**



Lisa Lazarus | *The Jockey Club* photo



**Mike Lauer, cont.**

"However, because the system is based on fault, if you do come, like Mr. Lauer did, with an explanation, and that explanation is credited, then obviously you are going to get a more lenient sanction," Lazarus said.

"So in [Lauer's] case, his suspension was 2 1/2 months out of a potential of 24 months," Lazarus said. "And his fine was about 10% of the maximum fine. So that just shows how HIWU viewed his fault on that continuum."

**'Happy' or 'Hell'?**

Lauer steadfastly believes he was wronged by HIWU and HISA, while Lazarus firmly asserts the systems at those agencies worked exactly the way they were intended to.

Surely, there must be a middle-ground perspective. *TDN* sought out Alan Foreman, who is widely recognized as one of the nation's leading racing law and equine attorneys, to see what he had to say on the subject.

In September 2023, Foreman, the chairman and chief executive officer of the Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association, agreed to serve as an impartial go-between, or ombudsman, on behalf of HISA, HIWU, and horsemen. In this role, he provides confidential advice and assistance at no cost to trainers, owners and other HISA-covered persons, while communicating feedback to the agencies about how they can improve their programs. When Foreman took the job, he pledged to donate all compensation paid by both sides to the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance.

This means Foreman is usually the first person trainers contact when HIWU notifies them of an alleged infraction. Lauer sought him out, and he said they spoke for several hours when Lauer first learned of the ruling against him. But in keeping with his obligations as an ombudsman, Foreman told *TDN* he would not be able to discuss Lauer's case in detail because of confidentiality requirements.

However, one of the first general points Foreman made about Lauer's case that he said should be heartening to horsemen is that Lauer was able to resolve his charge without having to go through with the full-blown hearing process.

"Up until now, it's required a trainer to go through the expense and the difficulty of prevailing in an arbitration," Foreman said.



Alan Foreman | *Horsephotos*

"There are changes in the pipeline," Foreman said. "We've been discussing this and pushing for these changes for some time. There is a change presently that has been submitted by HISA to the FTC with respect to the drugs of illicit human use that would give to HIWU the discretion to resolve those cases, and they can do so by concluding that it is more likely than not that the positive was the result of contamination. 'Inadvertent exposure' is the term I like to use, as opposed to an intentional administration.

"So if HIWU is satisfied that the positive test was not the result of an intentional administration, the penalty is now reduced to a maximum of 60 days, and that can be mitigated down based on facts and circumstances. And assuming the FTC approves these changes, that would allow HISA and HIWU to resolve this with the trainer short of having to go to arbitration," Foreman said.

"It would be handled similarly to the way racing commissions handled them before HISA and HIWU went into effect," Foreman

said. "And that was a part of the system that was not broken, and did not need fixing. I think there was satisfaction that the racing commissions were correctly handling those kinds of cases. And the handling was, if a positive test was reported, obviously the horse was disqualified because it had a drug in its system. But the trainer penalty was substantially mitigated.

"In many jurisdictions, the trainer was not penalized," Foreman said. "The disqualification of the horse was deemed to be a sufficient penalty. Some jurisdictions may have imposed a fine or a short suspension. But nothing like the drastic penalties that are being imposed now, which can be career-ending [for] something that a trainer probably could not have prevented."

Foreman continued: "This area of contamination seems to be the most vexing area. My own personal observation, at least based upon the calls that I get, is that the number of banned substance violations has substantially decreased. I'm not seeing that many, at least [for] those where trainers are calling me, or I need to refer people out to attorneys. That seems to have calmed down.

"What has surprised me [is] I thought that there would be a large number of positive tests in the controlled substance area, the therapeutic medications, because we were going to screening limits, because we were going to international standards. **Cont.**

**Mike Lauer, cont.**

"We were, in many respects, backing out the withdrawal time, or the time within which a drug should be administered to a horse, to 72 hours, as opposed to previously, with the non-steroidals, we had gone from 24 to 48 hours. But that hasn't materialized. There have not been a substantial number--at least compared to prior [findings from] HISA and HIWU--of positives as a result of the new system. Which to me is a very positive indication for the industry," Foreman said.

"The horsemen have been adjusting to the new system, and it's working," Foreman said. "That doesn't mean that horsemen aren't scared to death when they see these contamination violations and they're concerned about what is happening to these trainers. At least we're attempting to get that under control. And when I say we, I'm certainly trying to do it on behalf of the industry. I don't work for HISA. I don't work for HIWU. But they have been listening. I think they've been coming to grips with the problems they created here. I think they're hearing the outcry from the industry and they are adapting to it..."

"So slowly but surely, changes are taking place," Foreman summed up. "That's what I've been advocating for."

Lazarus, in her separate interview, corroborated Foreman's observation that the banned substance violations are decreasing.

"When we first launched the program, about 40% of the positives were for banned substances, what we would categorize as doping," Lazarus said. "That has completely dropped, [so] I think that has had a genuinely important impact. There are also a number of investigations that are ongoing that I believe are going to have a very positive impact."

"[HIWU is] only seven months in, so I need a little bit more time to bring some of these things to fruition," Lazarus said. "But I really believe that this is a strong, fair, balanced, effective program. And we're going to have to continually tweak and evaluate and be open to feedback. But I think overall, I am very happy with where we've stood on that balance."

However, when asked if she concurred with Foreman that the contamination positives were the "most vexing" part of the system, Lazarus had a different take.

"I think what happens a lot is when one horseman gets

concerned about something, and they speak about it on the backside, it becomes almost like an epidemic of concern," Lazarus said. "And so that is probably the most difficult thing for us to deal with generally, is some of the misinformation, and some of the, kind of, 'fear-mongering' that I think is sometimes intended by our detractors."

"I think when we're at the year mark, there's going to be a fair amount of comfort with where we are," Lazarus said. "I think if you ask any trainer, they will tell you that on the [controlled] medication side our program is fair and balanced and working. I haven't heard a single complaint about the medication program."

The adjustment is the severity and the different system on the doping side. And I think that's important for the evolution of the industry and for us to get to a point where we're protecting the clean trainers.

"That's what it's all about, right? Protecting the trainers who are competing fairly, and also who have systems in place to avoid some of the mismanagement of medication or inadvertent exposure," Lazarus said. "We're going to get better at that, and I think over time trainers are going to feel

more comfortable with what they have in place and that the risks to them are very low, and that if they do have an inadvertent exposure, that we'll treat it fairly."

As a way of wrapping up the conversation, *TDN* proposed an analogy to Lazarus: Would it be fair and accurate to say that in any large enforcement endeavor like an anti-doping control program, there are going to be growing pains as the system gets rolled out, and even if the agencies make corrections along the way, it's inevitable that there are going to be some trainers--like Mike Lauer--who end up being collateral damage as the result of HISA and HIWU's evolving methods of enforcement?

Lazarus didn't buy that line of reasoning.

"I don't consider him 'collateral damage,'" Lazarus said. "I think he actually received very fair sanctions under the circumstances. Under the previous state racing commissions, fault was never a consideration. It was a pure, strict liability thing [and] the consequences were extreme without any opportunity to defend..."

"Mr. Lauer settled his case. That was his choice. He did not have to do that, but he decided to settle his case, and that was the resolution that he was happy to accept," Lazarus said. **Cont.**



Mike Lauer | Coady



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**Mike Lauer, cont.**

"Happy" is not how Lauer would describe the ending to his five-month ordeal with HISA and HIWU.

"Hell" was the adjective he chose.

"They were going to drag me out," Lauer said, noting that even though his case never reached an actual hearing, he still got invoiced \$13,700 for having initiated the arbitration process.

After submitting all his supporting documentation by the first weekend of December, Lauer said the attorney for HIWU "wanted to try and make a deal, and if we couldn't, he was going to ask for more time to submit his brief so the hearing [date] would have to be reset."

Lauer said HIWU's initial offer of a \$4,000 fine and 120-day suspension was "not acceptable" to him. The next offer was the \$2,600 fine and 75 days with time served, which was to end his suspension by Dec 25, 2023.

Essentially, Lauer said, he accepted that settlement just to get his life back.

"My attorney said this is the best deal you're going to get without going to the hearing and a possible appeal and all that," Lauer said. "Plus the money, and the extra time, and you have no idea if you're going to win or lose."

Now that he's back in action, what's Lauer's takeaway message for other trainers who might find themselves in the crosshairs of HISA and HIWU over a metformin positive?

"Their whole operation is very intimidating," Lauer said. "And it's aimed to be intimidating."

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**Lothenbach dispersal, cont. from p1**

**Bell's the One** | Coady Photography

Lothenbach, who passed away in November, was among the leading owners in North America for nearly three decades. Over the last 23 years, his Lothenbach Stables celebrated more than

800 wins and earned more than \$30 million. He was a top 10-ranked owner nationally in 2020 and 2022.

"He is one of the few guys who bred to race exclusively in this era," MacKenzie said.

Among Vinery's 46 offerings from the dispersal are a pair of mares who won graded stakes in the Lothenbach colors.

**Bell's the One** (Majesticperfection) (**hip 476**) won the 2020 GI Derby City Distaff S., the 2021 GII Honorable Miss H. and GII Thoroughbred Club of America S. and the 2019 GII Lexus Raven Run S. She was third in the 2020 GI Breeders' Cup F/M Sprint.

The hard-knocking mare hit the board in 21 of 27 races--including three runnings of the GI Madison S.--with 13 wins and earnings of \$2,000,675.



**Robert Lothenbach leads Bell's the One into winner's circle**

*Coady Photography*

"Any international buyer that is seriously playing at the top level would want to have this mare," MacKenzie said. "She was such a good race filly for so long and she looks fantastic right now. They can take her straight to the shed and breed her to whoever they want. I've got to think she appeals to every continent."

The 8-year-old mare, who RNA'd for \$2.6 million at the 2022 Fasig-Tipton November, was bred to **Flightline** last year, but sells not in foal after aborting in September.

"I was a farm manager for a long time before I got into the sales side and a lot of maidens slip their first ones and never have an issue the rest of their career," MacKenzie said. "I've seen it a lot. So it's not a worry at all for me. I think anyone with experience with broodmares knows it shouldn't be any kind of issue and she'll be fine going forward."

Vinery's offerings also include **She Can't Sing** (Bernardini) (**hip 485**), winner of the 2022 GIII Chilukki S. The 7-year-old broodmare prospect raced 39 times in her career, hitting the board 22 times and earning \$883,558. **Cont.**



**Lothenbach dispersal, cont.**

"What a beautiful mare," MacKenzie said of She Can't Sing. "She ran hard for a while and she's by the right sire in Bernardini, a great broodmare sire. And she has leg and scope. She is taller than most Bernardinis. Again, she should fit any continent, any kind of top-level breeder should take a hard look at trying to get her."

Beyond the pair of graded-stakes winning mares, MacKenzie said he thinks there is plenty to appeal to buyers in the dispersal as the breeding season looms.

"There is a group of maiden fillies coming off the racetrack that are pretty interesting that have good looks and talent," he said. "And there are a couple other younger broodmares in foal to the right sires. So it's going to be a strong showing."



**She Can't Sing** | Coady Photography

Taylor Made Sales Agency got the Lothenbach dispersal started with a week-long digital offering of 76 horses of racing age which opened Monday and closes Friday. During the Winter Mixed sale next week, the consignment will include 19 short yearlings, all bred by Lothenbach.

"I think they represent a really good opportunity right now," Marshall Taylor said of the offerings. "You look down there at all those pedigrees and who they are by, pedigrees that nobody has really had an opportunity to buy into and then it's a group of very good stallions that Mr. Lothenbach bred to. Normally, you get down to this point and you've got the February sale and there are only so many [yearlings] in the sale. So to have this opportunity with some of the stallions that Mr. Lothenbach bred to, it's a huge opportunity."

After a competitive foal market, next week's Winter Mixed sale offers buyers a final chance to buy short yearlings at public auction this year.

"I think the foal market, now short yearling, market has been so strong," Taylor said. "You look at November and it was really

hard to buy. The good foals were bringing a lot of money and selling very well. That carried on to January. So having this dispersal with these short yearlings, I think there is going to be a strong market for them. I think there are a lot of people out there that still want to buy a good baby by a good stallion. And I think all of that is just going to carry over to this sale."

With the digital portion of the dispersal in full swing, Taylor said he was seeing plenty of interest for the horses of racing age this week and requests for information on many of those horses' siblings who will be on offer on-site at Fasig-Tipton next week.

"Right now, we just started the racehorse dispersal [Monday], so there has been a lot of interest there," Taylor said. "We've had a lot of calls on the short yearlings, too. People calling us asking what they look like, a lot of different pinhookers have been asking about them. Mr. Lothenbach has a lot of nice horses in the digital sale and a lot of these babies are half-siblings."

From the digital sale through the Winter sale, Taylor kept coming back to that word--opportunity.

"From an overall picture on all of Mr. Lothenbach's offerings, from the mares, to the racehorses, to the babies--especially with the fillies--to have the opportunity to buy into these families is a rare thing. Mr. Lothenbach was a straight breed-to-race guy and nobody has ever had the opportunity to buy into these families. He has a lot of nice families, so there are going to be some big opportunities."

The Fasig-Tipton Winter Mixed Sale will be held next Monday and Tuesday at Newtown Paddocks. Both sessions of the auction begin at 10 a.m.

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## ZEDAN JOINS LIST OF OWNERS STICKING WITH BAFFERT DESPITE DERBY BAN

by Bill Finley

Amr Zedan, who owns several top 3-year-old colts, has informed *TDN* that his horses are staying with trainer Bob Baffert, which means they will be ineligible to run in the GI Kentucky Derby. Churchill Downs set Monday as a deadline for owners to take their horses away from Baffert. Any horse remaining in his barn after the deadline will not be permitted to race at Churchill Downs.

"No move," Zedan said in a text message. "Mr. Baffert our man."

Tuesday morning, John Cherwa of the *Los Angeles Times* reported that no 3-year-old Derby prospects had left the barn after the Jan. 29 deadline imposed by Churchill Downs.

"Nobody is going to transfer their horses," Baffert told the *Times*. "I just remain focused on training my horses and competing in the big races. It's out of my hands. I just want what's best for the game." **Cont.**

**Zedan sticking with Baffert, cont.****Bob Baffert and Amr Zedan** | Coady Photography

Zedan has several top 3-year-old colts. The best may be 'TDN Rising Star' Muth (**Good Magic**), the winner of the GI **American Pharoah** S. and the GII San Vicente S. He also has 'TDN Rising Star' Maymun (**Frosted**), a very impressive winner of his Jan. 20 debut, and **Coach Prime** (**Quality Road**), who was third in the GII Los Alamitos Futurity.

On Monday, the **TDN reached out to a number of Baffert owners** and could not find one who had decided to take their horses away from Baffert in order for them to run in the Derby. Zedan joins a list that includes Mike Pegram, Jack Liebau and Dr. Edward Allred, Baoma Corp and the partnership of SF Racing, Starlight Racing and Madaket Stables.

In 2022 and 2023, years in which Baffert was also banned, several owners turned their horses over to former Baffert assistant Tim Yakteen, which made them eligible to contest the Derby.

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## BRADY TO PARTNER WITH REPOLE IN NOBULL

Tom Brady's TB12 and Brady Brand--a line of fitness supplements and athletic apparel--will merge with Mike Repole's NOBULL footwear and apparel brand, creating one company operating under the NOBULL brand, according to news posted on the NOBULL website Tuesday morning.

The company will offer footwear, apparel, and nutrition products, and Brady will become NOBULL's second-largest shareholder, according to CNBC.

"TB12 and NOBULL Footwear & Apparel have merged to create one company dedicated to help you improve mentally, emotionally, and physically," according to the statement on the website. "Tom Brady is no stranger to the NOBULL mentality; on

and off the field he has always been focused on making himself better every day. The two brands have come together to provide the right tools to help everyone reach their full potential. Exceptional training footwear and apparel, uncompromising nutrition, and a healthy obsession with getting better every day--that's what TB12 and NOBULL's all about."

Repole and Brady, widely regarded as the best NFL quarterback of all time, reportedly met at the Kentucky Derby several years ago, where Repole is expected to be represented in 2024 by his champion 2-year-old **Fierceness** (**City of Light**).

Repole, one of the sport's largest owners and a veteran in the beverage business, bought a majority stake in NOBULL in July, 2023.

"We both have enough humility to understand that this is tough and will be a big challenge," Brady said in a video interview with Sportico Tuesday morning. "But we have some tremendous teams that are already in place that are excited for the challenge. Neither of us have backed down from a challenge a day in our life, and we don't plan on it anytime soon."

**Tom Brady** | Getty Images

"This is going to be incredibly fun but also an emotional opportunity for us to give back," Repole said in the same interview. "We have some great teams. I didn't do what I did alone, and neither did Tom. Now we're making it a NoBull family. We're going to influence as many people as we can."

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## TDN CRITERIA

*The races covered in the TDN are as follows:*

- Stakes: purses of \$40,000/up
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## GOLDEN GATE TRAINER RULED AGAINST IN RAPE CASE

Trainer Ari Herbertson lost a civil rape case and will owe the unnamed plaintiff \$9 million, according to an email from Diane Rames, law office administrator at the Oakland firm Gwilliam Ivary Chiosso Cavalli & Brewer, APC.

According to the firm's email, Jane Doe was attending live racing at Golden Gate on Jan. 12, 2019 when she was drugged and raped by Herbertson. The latter was first criminally prosecuted and plead no contest to a lesser charge of assault with a deadly weapon. He was sentenced to one-year incarceration and two years' probation in that case before Alameda County Superior Court Judge Jeffrey Brand ruled in the civil case Jan. 17. The civil action alleged various torts related to the rape. Judge Brand awarded the defendant \$3 million in general damages and \$6 million in punitive damages.

"I commend Jane Doe for pursuing her civil case," said attorney Randall Strauss of Gwilliam Ivary Chiosso Cavalli & Brewer, who represented the plaintiff throughout her civil case. "She was viciously and violently attacked, yet she was unafraid to pursue her attacker in court. Her bravery helps send a message that our society will not tolerate sexual battery and will work to seek justice for victims of sexual abuse."

According to equineline.com, Herbertson trained from 2016-21 and compiled a record of 134 wins from 447 starts. [Click](#) to see a copy of the court order.

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## WEEKLY STEWARDS AND COMMISSIONS RULINGS, JAN. 23-29 *by Dan Ross*

Every week, the *TDN* posts a roundup of the relevant Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act (HISA)-related rulings from around the country.

Among this week's rulings, the seven-day prohibition on intra-articular injections prior to a timed workout continues to trip up stakeholders.

Six new individuals are facing possible sanctions for violations of this rule, to go with the 30 individuals whose cases have already been resolved. A typical first-time violation comes with a \$3,000 fine.

One of the trainers in question is Ignacio Correias, whose trainee Didia (Arg) (Orpen) violated the intra-articular injection rule prior to a timed workout dated Jan. 11 of this year. Didia subsequently won the GII Pegasus World Cup Filly and Mare Turf Invitational S. on Jan. 27.

### NEW HISA/HIWU STEWARDS RULINGS

The following rulings were reported on HISA's **"rulings"** portal

and through the Horseracing Integrity and Welfare Unit's (HIWU) **"pending"** and **"resolved"** cases portals.

#### Resolved ADMC Violations

**Date:** 11/09/2023

**Licensee:** George Weaver, trainer

**Penalty:** Disqualification of Covered Horse's Race results, including forfeiture of all purses and other compensation, prizes, trophies, points, and rankings and repayment or surrender (as applicable); a fine of \$500; imposition of 1.5 Penalty Points. Admission.

**Explainer:** For the presence of Dantrolene—Controlled Medication (Class C)—in a sample taken from Typhoon Fury, who won at Aqueduct on 11/09/23. This was a possible violation of Rule 3312—Presence of Controlled Medication Substance and/or its Metabolites or Markers (Post-Race/Vets' List).

#### Pending ADMC Violations

**Date:** 12/26/2023

**Licensee:** Manuel Badilla, trainer

**Penalty:** Pending

**Alleged violation:** Medication violation

**Explainer:** For the presence of Dexamethasone—Controlled Medication (Class C)—in a sample taken from Shana Madel, who finished second at Golden Gate on 12/26/23. This is a possible violation of Rule 3312—Presence of Controlled Medication Substance and/or its Metabolites or Markers (Post-Race/Vets' List).

**Date:** 01/11/2024

**Licensee:** Ignacio Correias, trainer

**Penalty:** Pending

**Alleged violation:** Pre-workout intra-articular injection violation

**Explainer:** A possible violation of Rule 3314—

Use or Attempted Use of a Controlled Medication Substance or a Controlled Medication Method—on the horse, Didia. This is also a possible violation of Rule 4222—Intra-Articular Injections Within Seven (7) Days of Timed and Reported Workout.

**Date:** 12/14/2023

**Licensee:** Todd Pletcher, trainer

**Penalty:** Pending

**Alleged violation:** Medication violation

**Explainer:** For the presence of Dexamethasone—Controlled Medication (Class C)—in a sample taken from Give Me Kisses, who finished fifth at Aqueduct on 12/14/23. This is a possible violation of Rule 3312—Presence of Controlled Medication Substance and/or its Metabolites or Markers (Post-Race/Vets' List).



**Date:** 01/14/2024**Licensee:** James Tsirigotis, trainer**Penalty:** Pending**Alleged violation:** Pre-workout intra-articular injection violation**Explainer:** A possible violation of Rule 3314—

Use or Attempted Use of a Controlled Medication Substance or a Controlled Medication Method—on the horse, Melancholy Blues. This is also a possible violation of Rule 4222—Intra-Articular Injections Within Seven (7) Days of Timed and Reported Workout.

**Date:** 01/03/2024**Licensee:** Anthony Dutrow, trainer**Penalty:** Pending**Alleged violation:** Pre-workout intra-articular injection violation**Explainer:** A possible violation of Rule 3314—

Use or Attempted Use of a Controlled Medication Substance or a Controlled Medication Method—on the horse, Past Tense. This is also a possible violation of Rule 4222—Intra-Articular Injections Within Seven (7) Days of Timed and Reported Workout.

**Date:** 11/23/2023**Licensee:** Peter Miller, trainer**Penalty:** Pending**Alleged violation:** Medication violation

**Explainer:** For the presence of Phenylbutazone—Controlled Medication (Class C)—in a sample taken from House of Magic, who finished second at Del Mar on 11/23/23. This was a possible violation of Rule 3312—Presence of Controlled Medication Substance and/or its Metabolites or Markers (Post-Race/Vets' List).

**Date:** 01/05/2024**Licensee:** Rohan Crichton, trainer**Penalty:** Pending**Alleged violation:** Pre-workout intra-articular injection violation**Explainer:** A possible violation of Rule 3314—

Use or Attempted Use of a Controlled Medication Substance or a Controlled Medication Method—on the horse, Oconee Life. This is also a possible violation of Rule 4222—Intra-Articular Injections Within Seven (7) Days of Timed and Reported Workout.

**Date:** 01/05/2024**Licensee:** Jose Delgado, trainer**Penalty:** Pending**Alleged violation:** Pre-workout intra-articular injection violation

**Explainer:** A possible violation of Rule 3314—Use or Attempted Use of a Controlled Medication Substance or a Controlled Medication Method—on the horse,

Justintimeforwine. This is also a possible violation of Rule 4222—Intra-Articular Injections Within Seven (7) Days of Timed and Reported Workout.

**Date:** 01/14/2024**Licensee:** Peter Walder, trainer**Penalty:** Pending**Alleged violation:** Pre-workout intra-articular injection violation**Explainer:** A possible violation

of Rule 3314—Use or Attempted Use of a Controlled Medication Substance or a Controlled Medication Method—on the horse, Uncle Curly. This is also a possible violation of Rule 4222—Intra-Articular Injections Within Seven (7) Days of Timed and Reported Workout.

### OTHER KEY RULINGS

The *TDN* also publishes a roundup of key official rulings from the primary tracks within the four major racing jurisdictions of California, New York, Florida and Kentucky.

[Here's a primer](#) on how each of these jurisdictions adjudicates different offenses, what they make public (or not) and where.

### California

**Track:** Santa Anita**Date:** 01/27/2024**Licensee:** Geovanni Franco, jockey**Penalty:** Three-day suspension**Violation:** Careless riding

**Explainer:** Jockey Geovanni Franco, who rode King Apollo in the sixth race at Santa Anita Park on January 26, 2024, is suspended for 3 racing days (February 3, 4 and 9 2024) for failure to make the proper effort to maintain a straight course in the stretch, causing interference; a violation of California Horse Racing Board rule #1699 (Riding Rules-careless riding - first offense in the last sixty (60) days).

**Track:** Santa Anita**Date:** 01/27/2024**Licensee:** Mario Gutierrez, jockey**Penalty:** Three-day suspension**Violation:** Careless riding

**Explainer:** Jockey Mario Gutierrez, who rode Be Punctual in the fourth race at Santa Anita Park on January 26, 2024, is suspended for 3 racing days (February 3, 4 and 9 2024) for crossing over without sufficient clearance going into the first turn, causing interference; a violation of California Horse Racing Board rule #1699 (Riding Rules - careless riding).



## STAKES SCHEDULE FOR BELMONT AT THE BIG A SPRING/SUMMER MEET SET

The stakes schedule for the 2024 Belmont at the Big A spring/summer meet, which will open Thursday, May 2, will include 32 stakes worth more than \$6.6 million in total purses, the New York Racing Association, Inc. (NYRA) announced Tuesday.

As announced in December, the ongoing construction of a new and re-imagined Belmont Park will require significant adjustments to the customary NYRA schedule. Most notably, the 2024 Belmont Stakes Racing Festival will be held at Saratoga Race Course from June 6-9. In addition, the spring/summer and fall meets traditionally held at Belmont will take place at Aqueduct Racetrack in 2024.

Differences between the circumference of Belmont Park and Aqueduct Racetrack will require slight distance changes to a number of races to be contested during the Belmont at the Big A spring/summer meet.

On the turf, five races previously run at seven furlongs [Elusive Quality, Soaring Softly, Paradise Creek, NYSSS Cupecoy's Joy, NYSSS Spectacular Bid] will be contested at six furlongs. In addition, both the GI Belmont Derby Invitational and GI Fasig-Tipton Belmont Oaks Invitational will be contested at 1 3/16 miles on turf rather than the customary 1 1/4 miles. On the main track, the GII Brooklyn will be run at 11 furlongs rather than the traditional 12 furlongs.

A stakes-laden program on Saturday, July 6 will feature four graded events led by a pair of Grade Is on the turf in the \$750,000 Belmont Derby Invitational for sophomores and the \$500,000 Fasig-Tipton Belmont Oaks Invitational for sophomore fillies. These prestigious contests will be supported by the GII \$200,000 John A. Nerud for older horses sprinting seven furlongs and the GIII \$200,000 Dwyer for sophomores going one mile.

For the full Belmont at the Big A spring/summer meet stakes schedule, visit [nyra.com/spring-summer](https://nyra.com/spring-summer).

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## FIRST FOAL FOR HAPPY SAVER

**Happy Saver** (Super Saver--Happy Week, by Distorted Humor), winner of the 2020 GI Jockey Club Gold Cup S., was represented by his first foal when Planeta (Giant's Causeway) produced a filly last week. The filly was born at Hagyard Farm, which was also the birthplace of **Happy Saver** and home of the Kentucky nursery of his breeder, Wertheimer and Frere.

The foal was bred by Hagyard Farm assistant manager Jose Sarinana, who also helped raise her sire.

"Happy Saver was our best foal, best yearling and went on to be our best racehorse in my time here at Hagyard Farm," Sarinana said. "I wouldn't expect any less from his foals and having this well-balanced filly carrying **Happy Saver's** traits makes me very happy."



**Happy Saver--Planeta filly**

Carrying the Wertheimers' colors, **Happy Saver** hit the board in 11 of 13 starts, with five wins and earnings of \$1,258,100. In addition to his Gold Cup win, he also won the 2020 Federico Tesio S. and was second in the 2021 Gold Cup and GI Clark S., as well as the 2022 GI Metropolitan H. and GI Whitney S.

The Wertheimers partnered with Airdrie Stud for **Happy Saver's** stallion career following his retirement from racing. **Happy Saver** will stand the 2024 breeding season at Airdrie for a fee of \$10,000.

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## MUCHO MACHO MAN TO ADENA SPRINGS

**Mucho Macho Man** (Macho Uno--Ponche de Leona, by Ponche), winner of the 2013 GI Breeders' Cup Classic, will stand the 2024 breeding season at Adena Springs in Ontario, Canada. The 16-year-old stallion is the sire of GI Pegasus World Cup Invitational S. winner Mucho Gusto, as well as graded winners City Man and Mucho Unusual. He will stand for C\$4,500 LF/S&N.

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## 2024 DERBY TROPHY UNVEILED

The gold trophy that will go to the winner of the upcoming 150th GI Kentucky Derby was unveiled to the public Tuesday at Churchill Downs. The special Kentucky Derby trophy was handcrafted by silversmiths of S.R. Blackinton in Smithfield, R.I. from 14-karat solid yellow gold and green gold over a period of more than six months. As always, the front of the trophy is adorned by a 14-karat gold horseshoe pointed upward, the top features a 14-karat gold horse and rider, and the sides showcase a pair of horseshoe-shaped wreath handles.



2024 Kentucky Derby trophy | Horsephotos

The trophy stands 22 inches tall and weighs just under 68 ounces, excluding its jade base and unique gems added to this year's milestone trophy.

As was the case with previous special anniversaries--1949 (75th), 1974 (100th) and 1999 (125th)--this year's trophy has unique jeweled embellishments to commemorate the special 150th anniversary.

A distinctive garland of roses outfitted with 196 rubies, 96 marquise emeralds and 36 round emeralds is draped across the withers of the horse atop the 2024 trophy. Additionally, there are 12 diamonds on the cover cape beneath the horse, 38 rubies on the circular braid atop the gold cup, and eight diamonds within the horseshoe on the front of the trophy.

Three smaller sterling silver replica trophies are awarded to the winning jockey, trainer and breeder of the Kentucky Derby.

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## Friday, Oaklawn #9, post time: 5:50 p.m. EST








**BAYAKOA S.-GIII, \$250,000, 4yo/up, f/m, 1 1/16m**

PP	HORSE	SIRE	OWNER	TRAINER	JOCKEY	WT
1	The Alys Look 	<b>Connect</b>	Thrash, Ike and Thrash, Dawn	Walsh	Bejarano	119
2	Ice Orchid	Super Saver	Shortleaf Stable, Inc.	Ortiz	Landeros	119
3	Misty Veil 	<b>Tonalist</b>	John P. Stewart	Maker	Vazquez	121
4	Just Katherine 	<b>Justify</b>	R.T Racing Stable	Jimenez	Diaz	119
5	Butterbean 	Klimt	Magdalena Racing and Klimashousky, William	McPeek	Leparoux	119
6	Comparative	<b>Street Sense</b>	Godolphin, LLC	Cox	Franco	121
7	Hot and Sultry 	Speightster	Lieblong, Alex and JoAnn	Casse	Santana, Jr.	119
8	Skratch Kat 	Arrogate	Rigney Racing, LLC	Bauer	Rosario	124
9	Shotgun Hottie	<b>Gun Runner</b>	Aldabbagh, Omar and Ganje, Jeff	DeVaux	Torres	119

**Breeders:** 1-G. Watts Humphrey Jr., 2-Shortleaf Stable, 3-William Humphries & Altair Farms, LLC, 4-Boyd Brooks, Louis Brooks Ranch Limited Partnership, Hugh Owen, et al., 5-Woodgate Farm, 6-Godolphin, 7-Cobalt Investments, LLC, 8-Fred W. Hertrich III & John D. Fielding, 9-Vincent Colbert

## Saturday, Oaklawn #11, post time: 5:50 p.m. EST

**SOUTHWEST S.-GIII, \$800,000, 3yo, 1 1/16m**

PP	HORSE	SIRE	OWNER	TRAINER	JOCKEY	WT
1	Maycocks Bay	Speightstown	Godolphin, LLC	Stidham	Arrieta	119
2	Charleston	<b>Tapiture</b>	Brinley Enterprises LLC	Fires	Hernandez	117
3	Magic Grant 	<b>Good Magic</b>	Willis Horton Racing LLC	Milligan, Jr.	Landeros	117
4	Otto the Conqueror 	<b>Street Sense</b>	Three Chimneys Farm	Asmussen	Rosario	119
5	Wynstock 	Solomini	Allred, Edward C. and Liebau, Jack	Baffert	Frey	119
6	Liberal Arts	Arrogate	Ferraro, Evan and Ferraro, Stephen	Medina	Torres	119
7	Carbone	Mitole	Heiligbrodt, L. W & C & Flurry Racing Stables LLC	Asmussen	Santana, Jr.	119
8	Common Defense 	<b>Karakontie (Jpn)</b>	Bernsen, D, Holmes, T & M and Norevale Farm	McPeek	Leparoux	117
9	Linebacker 	Bolt d'Oro	Novogratz Racing Stables Inc.	Blair	Esquivel	117
10	Mystik Dan	Goldencents	Gasaway, Lance, 4 G Racing, and Hamby III, Daniel	McPeek	Hernandez, Jr.	117
11	Just Steel 	<b>Justify</b>	BC Stables, LLC	Lukas	Vazquez	117
12	Awesome Road 	<b>Quality Road</b>	Albaugh Family Stables LLC and Donegal Racing	Cox	Geroux	117

**Breeders:** 1-Godolphin, 2-Twin Creeks Farm, 3-Hill N Dale Equine Holdings, Inc, 4-Hoolie Racing Stable, LLC, 5-Empire Equines, LLC, 6-Stephen Ferraro & Evan Ferraro, 7-William & Corinne Heiligbrodt, 8-Tony Holmes, Norevale Farm & Union Dale, 9-Frederick C. Wieting, 10-Lance Gasaway, Daniel Hamby & 4GRacing, LLC, 11-Summerhill Farm, 12-Claiborne Farm






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**Saturday, Gulfstream #12, post time: 5:48 p.m. EST****HOLY BULL S.-GIII, \$250,000, 3yo, 1 1/16m**

PP	HORSE	SIRE	OWNER	TRAINER	JOCKEY	WT
1	Hades	Awesome Slew	D. J. Stable LLC and Cotran, Robert	Orseno	Lopez	118
2	Inveigled 	Enticed	Mark B. Grier	Cibelli	Ortiz, Jr.	120
3	Otello	Curlin	Siena Farm LLC and WinStar Farm LLC	Clement	Saez	122
4	Dancing Groom 	Vino Rosso	Alexandres, LLC	Sano	Alvarado	118
5	No More Time 	Not This Time	Morplay Racing LLC	D'Angelo	Ortiz	118
6	Domestic Product	Practical Joke	Klaravich Stables, Inc.	Brown	Gaffalione	118
7	Fierceness	City of Light	Repole Stable	Pletcher	Velazquez	124
8	Sea Streak	Sea Wizard	Holly Crest Farm	Owens, Jr	Panici	118








**Breeders:** 1-Ocala Stud, Joseph M. O'Farrell III, David O'Farrell, et al., 2-St. Simon Place LLC, 3-Siena Farms LLC, 4-Don Alberto Corporation, 5-MAMAS Thoroughbreds, LLC, 6-Klaravich Stables, 7-Repole Stable, Inc., 8-Holly Crest Farm

**Saturday, Gulfstream #8, post time: 3:38 p.m. EST****SWEETEST CHANT S.-GIII, \$175,000, 3yo, f, 1 1/16mT**

PP	HORSE	SIRE	OWNER	TRAINER	JOCKEY	WT
1	Life's an Audible 	Audible	Repole Stable	Pletcher	Ortiz, Jr.	118
2	Madame Mischief 	Into Mischief	Amo Racing USA	Delgado	Alvarado	118
3	Style Points	Oscar Performance	Cheyenne Stable LLC	Clement	Gaffalione	118
4	Pharoah's Wine	American Pharoah	Delony, Nancy, Pacella, William, and Shoop, Frank	Romans	Saez	118
5	Macanga	American Pharoah	Imaginary Stables and Sonny Stables	Dobles	Velazquez	118
6	Dynamic Pricing (Ire)	Night of Thunder (Ire)	Klaravich Stables, Inc.	Brown	Ortiz	118
7	Milliat (Ire)	Kodiac (GB)	Qatar Racing LLC	Sisterson	Murphy	118
8	Golden Ghost (GB) 	Medaglia d'Oro	D. J. Stable LLC	Casse	Lopez	120

**Breeders:** 1-Susan Moulton, 2-Champion Equine, LLC, 3-Candy Meadows, LLC, 4-Pacella Racing, Frank L. Jones & Nancy Delony, Frank Shoop, 5-Fred W. Hertrich III, 6-Epona Bloodstock Ltd, 7-Al Mohamediya Breeding, 8-Alpha Delta Stables LLC

**Saturday, Gulfstream #11, post time: 5:08 p.m. EST****KITTEN'S JOY S.-GIII, \$175,000, 3yo, 1 1/16mT**

PP	HORSE	SIRE	OWNER	TRAINER	JOCKEY	WT
1	Hammerstein	Oscar Performance	Amerman Racing LLC	Lynch	Alvarado	118
2	Edgartown 	Quality Road	Wathnan Racing	Motion	Murphy	118
3	Tocayo	Always Dreaming	Lugamo Racing Stable LLC	Klesaris	Saez	122
4	Agate Road 	Quality Road	Repole Stable and St. Elias Stables LLC	Pletcher	Ortiz	124
5	Deadpan 	Distorted Humor	D. J. Stable LLC	Casse	Velazquez	118
6	First World War 	War Front	Qatar Racing LLC and Hunter Valley Farm	Walsh	Gaffalione	118
7	Quokka 	Noble Mission (GB)	Don Alberto Stable	Albertrani	Zayas	118
8	Freedom Principle 	Flameaway	Echo Papa Racing Corp.	Garoffalo	Reyes	122
9	Noted 	Cairo Prince	Repole Stable	Pletcher	Ortiz, Jr.	122

**Breeders:** 1-Mrs. Jerry Amerman, 2-SF Bloodstock LLC & W. S. Farish, 3-Lugamo Racing Stables LLC, 4-CHC, Inc., 5-Don Alberto Corporation, 6-Skyfall Thoroughbreds LLC, 7-Don Alberto Corporation, 8-Lantern Hill Farm LLC, 9-Brereton C. Jones



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Saturday, Gulfstream #10, post time: 4:38 p.m. EST

FORWARD GAL S.-GIII, \$125,000, 3yo, f, 7f

PP	HORSE	SIRE	OWNER	TRAINER	JOCKEY	WT
1	Kissedbyanangel	Golden Lad	Rodolfo Sanchez-Salomon	Sanchez-Salomon	Saez	120
2	Fiona's Magic	St Patrick's Day	Stonehedge LLC	Yates	Gaffalione	120
3	Chi Chi	Audible	Ernest C. Frohboese	Wilensky	Alvarado	120
4	R Harper Rose	Khozan	Averill Racing LLC and Two Eight Racing LLC	Joseph, Jr.	Zayas	120
5	Nikitis 🐾	Audible	Schermerhorn, R, Team Hanley & Thirty Year Farm	Brown	Ortiz, Jr.	118
6	Scalable 🐾	Speightstown	Repole Stable	Pletcher	Ortiz	118
7	Witwatersrand 🐾	Connect	Gary Barber	Casse	Lopez	123

Breeders: 1-Super C Racing Inc, 2-Stonehedge, LLC, 3-France Weiner, 4-Sally J. Andersen, 5-Tony Holmes, Norevale Farm & Union Dale, 6-Stonestreet Thoroughbred Holdings LLC, 7-G. Watts Humphrey Jr.

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2024 Keeneland Sales Dates

April Selected Horses  
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September Yearling Sale | Sept. 9-21

November Breeding Stock Sale | Nov. 5-13

November Horses  
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### IN ORDER OF PURSE:

**9th-Parx Racing, \$65,400, Alw (NW1X)/Opt. Clm (\$75,000), 1-30, 3yo, 6 1/2f, 1:20.28, my, 3 1/2 lengths.**

**MAXIMUS MERIDIUS (c, 3, Maximus Mischief--Quiet Virtue, by Quiet American),** victorious by 10 1/2 lengths in his unveiling going a sixteenth shorter over this track in November, came home third in his latest start here Dec. 26. Getting blinkers on for his 2024 bow, the 3-2 favorite was in contention through an opening quarter in :22.33, took over through a half in :46.57, opened up by daylight and was comfortably clear of Bali Amour (Bal a Bali {Brz}) at the wire. The winner's dam, Quiet Virtue, produced a full brother to the winner last term and was bred back to Golden Lad. Lifetime Record: 3-2-0-1, \$91,700. **Click for the [Equibase.com](#) chart or VIDEO, sponsored by FanDuel TV.** O-LC Racing, Cash is King LLC and Wellesley Stable; B-Westerly Farm (PA); T-Robert E. Reid, Jr.



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**Omaha Beach (War Front),** Spendthrift Farm, \$40,000  
291 foals of racing age/29 winners/3 black-type winners  
5-Turfway, 7:55 p.m. EST, Msw 6f, Kehoe Beach, 3-1  
\$180,000 KEE NOV wnl; \$450,000 KEE SEP yrl



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### STAKES RESULTS:

**HANK MILLS SR. S.,** \$60,000, Turf Paradise, 1-29, 3yo/up, 6f, 1:08.04, ft.

1--**PRINCIPE CARLO, 120, h, 8, Coil--Princess Ezra (GB), by Rahy.** (\$4,000 RNA 2yo '18 BARAPR). O-Mia Familia Racing Stable and Rockingham Ranch; B-Richard Barton Enterprises (CA); T-Justin R. Evans; J-Luis Negron. \$33,600. Lifetime Record: MGSP, 34-9-9-0, \$543,423.

2--**Tony's Tapit, 120, h, 6, Tonalist--Autumn Wedding, by Runaway Groom.** (\$9,500 Ylg '19 ARZNOV). O-Kirk Sutherland; B-H & E Ranch (KY); T-Jose Silva, Jr. \$12,000.

3--**Kingdom Heart, 120, c, 4, Goldencents--Take Charge Card, by Will Take Charge.** (\$19,000 Ylg '21 OBSOCT; \$37,000 RNA 2yo '22 OBSAPR). 1ST BLACK TYPE. O-Holly and David Wilson; B-Bryan & Melodee Hicks (FL); T-Vladimir Cerin. \$6,000.

Margins: HF, NK, NK. Odds: 5.30, 21.10, 3.70.



**ALLOWANCE RESULTS:**

**8th-Parx Racing, \$53,800, (C)/Opt. Clm (\$50,000), 1-30, 4yo/up, 1m 70y, 1:47.28, my, 4 1/4 lengths.**

**OFFALY COOL (g, 4, **Kantharos**--Assured, by Empire Maker)**

Lifetime Record: SW, 13-5-4-1, \$219,693. O-Lawrence A. Rebbecchi, Jr.; B-Juddmonte Farms Inc (KY); T-Jacinto Solis. \*\$30,000 Ylg '21 KEESEP.

**7th-Parx Racing, \$42,960, (NW3L)/Opt. Clm (\$50,000), 1-30, 4yo/up, 6f, 1:12.79, my, 3/4 length.**

**BUMP N RUN (c, 4, **Tapiture**--Trish's Wish {MSP, \$228,900}, by**

**Smoke Glacken)** Lifetime Record: 9-3-2-0, \$96,760. O-Alicia Morgan; B-Timothy J Shaw & Alicia Morgan (MD); T-Timothy J. Shaw.

**7th-Mahoning Valley, \$35,100, (S), 1-30, (NW3L), 3yo/up, 1m, 1:42.80, my, 1/2 length.**

**CLEVELAND POWER (g, 5, **Global Power**--Cleveland, by Empire Maker)** Lifetime Record: 22-3-3-1, \$41,379. O-Carlos A. Lopez; B-Shelly & Jake Radosevich (OH); T-Carlos A. Lopez.

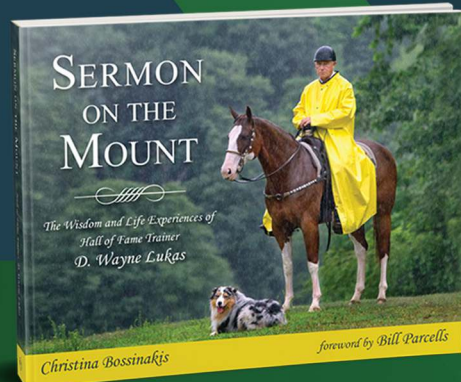
**8th-Mahoning Valley, \$26,400, Alw, 1-30, (NW3L), 3yo/up, 6f, 1:12.19, my, 3 1/4 lengths.**

**MORETHANREADYEDDIE (g, 4, **More Than Ready**--Allez Marie {GSP-Brz}, by Unbridled's Song)** Lifetime Record: 10-3-3-0, \$104,480. O-Richard Burnsworth; B-Stud TNT LLC (KY); T-Anthony Farrior. \*\$190,000 Ylg '21 KEESEP. \*\*1/2 to Legalize (**Constitution**), SW, \$131,775; Full to Tomato Bill, GSP, \$152,575; 1/2 to Fouette (**Nyquist**), MSP, \$303,845; 1/2 to Workaholic (**Sky Mesa**), SW, \$144,828.

**ADDITIONAL MAIDEN WINNERS:**

**Compute This, f, 3, **Cloud Computing**--I Like It (SP, \$138,051), by Henny Hughes. Mahoning Valley, 1-30, (S), 6f, 1:14.12. Lifetime Record: 6-1-2-3, \$41,550. B-Peter J. Sheppell (OH). \*\$14,500 RNA Ylg '22 OTBOMX. \*1/2 to Twerk (Speightster), SP, \$189,475.**

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**Cloud Computing**, Compute This, f, 3, o/o I Like It, by Henny Hughes. MSW, 1-30, Mahoning Valley

**Coil**, Principe Carlo, h, 8, o/o Princess Ezra (GB), by Rahy. Hank Mills Sr. S., 1-29, Turf Paradise

**Global Power**, Cleveland Power, g, 5, o/o Cleveland, by Empire Maker. ALW, 1-30, Mahoning Valley

**Kantharos**, Offaly Cool, g, 4, o/o Assured, by Empire Maker.

AOC, 1-30, Parx Racing

**Maximus Mischief**, Maximus Meridius, c, 3, o/o Quiet Virtue, by Quiet American. AOC, 1-30, Parx Racing

**More Than Ready**, Morethanreadyeddie, g, 4, o/o Allez Marie, by Unbridled's Song. ALW, 1-30, Mahoning Valley

**Tapiture**, Bump N Run, c, 4, o/o Trish's Wish, by Smoke Glacken. AOC, 1-30, Parx Racing

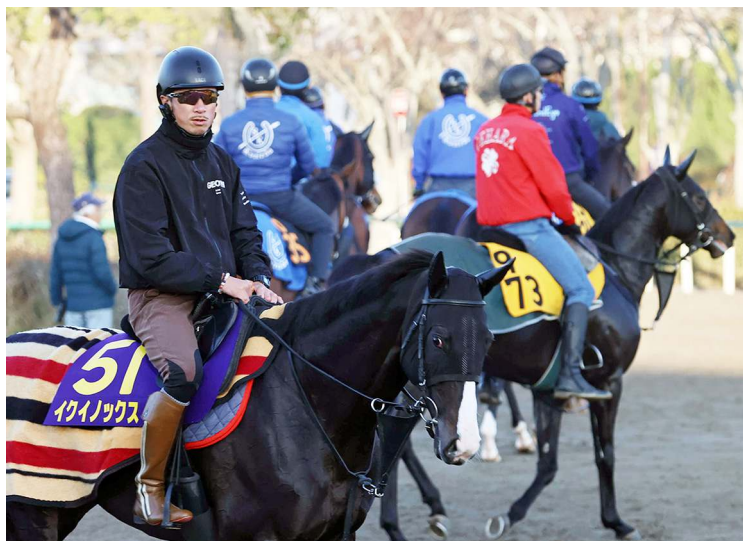
## TODAY'S FEATURED REPLAY



**Maximus Meridius** (by Maximus Mischief) wins with ease at Parx Tuesday afternoon.

(click to watch)

## JAPAN RULES AS THE JRA TURNS 70



Equinox at the JRA's Miho training centre | [Racingphotos.com](https://www.racingphotos.com)

By Emma Berry

The Longines World Racing Awards were held in London last week, but it could just as easily have been in Tokyo, such was the level of support from visitors from Japan. It is easy to understand why. For as well as this event being in part a coronation for Equinox (Jpn), the best horse in the world in 2023, it was also the first time in the 43-year history of the G1 Japan Cup that it was awarded the accolade of the Longines World's Best Horse Race.

The line-up for the Japan Cup in November had a depth that would have been the envy of organisers of other major races around the world. While it contained only one international challenger--France's versatile dual Group 1 winner Iresine (Fr)--the first five horses home read like a who's who of the Japanese turf. Equinox--who else?--led home Fillies' Triple Crown winner Liberty Island (Jpn), the previous year's Japanese Oaks winner Stars On Earth (Jpn), the 2022 Japanese Derby winner Do Deuce (Jpn) and Titleholder (Jpn), the Japanese St Leger winner of 2021 who had subsequently won another two Group 1 races at four. In short, it was a proper race.

The recognition of this, and in Equinox becoming the second Japanese horse after Just A Way (Jpn) to top the world rankings, comes as the Japan Racing Association (JRA) celebrates its 70th anniversary. [Cont. p3](#)

## JOSEPH O'BRIEN PAIR TO RACE ON IN HONG KONG

Group 1 second **Islandsinthestream (Ire)** (**Wootton Bassett {GB}**) and the group-placed **Mythology (Ire)** (**Starspangledbanner {Aus}**) have both been sold to Hong Kong interests and will race on in that jurisdiction, Joseph O'Brien confirmed to *The Irish Field* on Tuesday. The former is now in the barn of Tony Cruz, with Mythology settled in with Pierre Ng. "Everybody needs to keep trading for the bottom line," O'Brien told *The Irish Field*. "We're lucky to have had 2-year-olds who could compete in those top juvenile races and now it's all about looking forward to the next generation."

Formerly owned by Islandsinthestream Partnership, the dual winner is out of A Mist Opportunity (Aus) (Foxwedge {Aus}), herself a half-sister to three stakes winners. Bred by Haras d'Etreham and Katelanis Bloodstock, the bay brought €135,000 as an Arqana October yearling in 2022. [Cont. p7](#)

## IN TDN AMERICA TODAY

### DIABETES DRUG'S OUTSIZED, CONTESTED ROLE IN HORSE RACING'S ANTI-DOPING CRUSADE

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**Wednesday, January 31, 2024**



*Toji Morita's Deirdre (Jpn) (Harbinger {GB}), with Oisin Murphy and her connections, after winning the G1 Nassau S. at Goodwood in 2019. | [Racingfotos.com](http://Racingfotos.com)*

## IN THE HOT SEAT: ADAM RYAN

7

*Assistant trainer Adam Ryan is the latest to face the TDN's questionnaire.*

## £13.5 MILLION IN BONUSES PAID BY GBB SCHEME

8

*After Miss Bielsa (GB) (Nathaniel {Ire}) became the 999th filly to receive a Great British Bonus, the GBB Scheme has now awarded over £13.m in prize-money.*

## KARAKA BOOK 1 WRAPS WITH 800K FILLY

11

*The final day of Book 1 at the NZB Karaka Yearling Sale was topped by a filly by *Wootton Bassett* (GB) who went for NZ\$800,000.*

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## The JRA Turns 70 Cont. from p1

The inauguration of the Japan Cup in 1981 provided a vehicle with which the country could set about promoting its racing industry worldwide. This in turn led to the establishment of five international JRA offices in key racing nations, a situation which underlines the global ambition not just of Japan's trainers but of its racing administrators. And it is this joined-up approach, from the breeding farms, through to the personalities and the sport's governance, which has surely played its part in the racing supremacy of Japan.

Kanichi Kusano, the general manager of the JRA office in London, says, "We wanted to promote international racing. That's the reason why we started the Japan Cup. The objective of horse racing is to promote the pedigree. So if you don't have a strong horse

competing in a race it is difficult to upgrade the pedigree, and that's another reason that we started the Japan Cup.

"To promote the Japan Cup, we need people promoting it on the ground. The London office was the first office created, 32 years ago, and that was followed by New York, and then we gradually expanded to Hong Kong, Sydney and Paris. So we have five international offices now and still we have to keep working to find the runners for the Japan Cup. That's the main purposes of these offices, to promote the Japan Cup and Japanese racing."

The early years of the Japan Cup were liberally sprinkled with overseas winners from America, Ireland, Britain, France, New Zealand, Australia, and Germany. Among the visitors, Sir Michael Stoute is the only

trainer to have won it twice, with Singspiel (Ire) and Pilsudski (Ire) in 1996 and 1997. [Cont. p4](#)



Kanichi Kusano, second left, with Yoshito Yahagi and John Gosden in Newmarket | Emma Berry

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# MUTASAABEQ

Brown, 16.0hh | 2018 Invincible Spirit ex Ghanaati (Giant's Causeway)

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AT TATTS TOMORROW

## Bred in the Blue

Mutasaabeq represents the best of breeding and both his sire and his maternal family have a rich heritage of producing successful stallions.

His sire Invincible Spirit has delivered around 150 black-type winners in his long career, and some of his sons have proved to be potent at stud themselves – not least I Am Invincible, a multiple champion sire in Australia, and Kingman, who has quickly established himself as a major force in Europe.

2023 Group 1-winning sprinters Regional and Shaquille are by other sons of Invincible Spirit who have stood in Britain. Invincible Spirit's half-brother Kodiak is also one of Europe's leading sires, supplying among others the elite sprinters Campanelle, Fairyland, Hello Youmzain and Tiggy Wiggy.

Out of the outstanding 1,000 Guineas and Coronation Stakes heroine Ghanaati, by Giant's Causeway – the breed-shaping sire of Shamardal and, notably, the damsire of Kentucky stallion sensation Gun Runner.

Ghanaati is a half-sister to Champion Stakes runner-up Mawatheeq and Oaks third Rumoush and to the dam of 2023 Tattersalls Stakes winner and Dewhurst runner-up Alyanaabi. She is out of the dual Listed winner Sarayir, a daughter of Mr Prospector's blue hen mare Height Of Fashion.

Fillies' Mile and Princess of Wales's Stakes winner Height Of Fashion is best remembered for her top-class sons Nashwan, Unfuwain and Nayef, all of whom sired multiple winners at the highest level. She is also the ancestress of Baaeed, officially rated the best horse to have raced in Europe since Frankel and now an exciting young sire, and his dual Group 1-winning full-brother Hukum.

Furthermore, Height Of Fashion was a three-parts sister to Burghclere, whose Group 1-winning daughter Wind In Her Hair became the dam of Japan's exceptionally gifted champion and epoch-defining sire Deep Impact. There are few better stallion-making families in the stud book.

There is also compelling evidence of quality in Mutasaabeq's more recent pedigree, as every one of Ghanaati's other six progeny to have raced also won, including the highly rated Afaak and Wafy.

**£6,500** October 1st

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### The JRA Turns 70 Cont.

The last international winner came almost 20 years ago, when Luca Cumani saddled Alkaased for Michael Charlton.

The following year came the turn of Deep Impact (Jpn) and since then it has been a solely Japanese success story, despite attempts from the likes of Oaks winner Dancing Rain (Ire), Arc winner Solemia (Ire), Irish Derby winner Trading Leather (Ire), and Melbourne Cup winner Dunaden (Fr). In 2022, Onesto (Ire), Tunnes (Ger) and Simca Mille (Ire) all took their chance but came home empty-handed. Well, not quite, for, as well as significant bonuses on offer for winners of major races around the world if they can win the Japan Cup, there is also a generous allowance simply for showing up.

"The Japan Cup is invitational and we support all the transportation fees for the horses and the connections, including the jockeys," Kusano explains. "And we also have appearance money. So for runners coming to the Japan Cup, without spending any money their owners will get at least £100,000 as appearance money. It's a great opportunity, but it is still not that easy to find runners.

"It's run in late November so obviously the trainer has to plan it, and there are lots of competitive races at the end of the season like the Arc, the Breeders' Cup and the Hong Kong

International Races, so that's what we are competing against. And because we have very quick ground, not all the European horses can compete equally in those conditions, so that limits our selection as well."

He adds, "Winning is important, of course, but just by visiting Japan and understanding the beauty of Japanese racing, that is something that we want those owners to explore, to experience another country that is staging racing."

Last year there were 24 races around the world for which the winner was in line for a \$3-million bonus if he or she went on to win the Japan Cup. In 2024, the Coronation Cup at Epsom has been added to that list, with the Derby, Prince of Wales's S., Eclipse S., King George VI and Queen Elizabeth S., Juddmonte International and Champion S. also eligible in Britain.

In France, the Prix du Jockey Club, Grand Prix de Saint-Cloud, Grand Prix de Paris and Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe are all qualifying races, while in Ireland the Irish Derby and Irish Champion S. also make the list.

It is also worth noting that it is not only the Japan Cup that accepts overseas horses. It was the country's first, but since 2007 all graded races in Japan, which number more than 120, were opened up to outside runners, including some jump races.

[Cont. p5](#)



Agnes World, with Japanese jockey legend Yutaka Take in the irons, winning the July Cup at Newmarket in 2000 | [Racingfotos.com](#)



## The JRA Turns 70 Cont.

The tide flows both ways, of course, and since 1958, when Hakuchikara (Jpn) became the first Japanese horse to compete abroad, in the USA, the floodgates have gradually been forced open.

The following year Hakuchikara won the Washington Birthday Handicap S. Seeking The Pearl, Taiki Shuttle, El Condor Pasa and Agnes World all won Group 1 races in France in 1998 and 1999, while the latter won the July Cup of 2000, making him the first Japanese-trained winner of a Group 1 race in Britain.

Cesario (Jpn), later the dam of stallions Epiphaneia (Jpn), Leontes (Jpn) and Saturnalia (Jpn), laid down another important landmark in 2005 when becoming the first winner of the American Oaks and Japanese Oaks, while the following year's Melbourne Cup saw a 1-2 for Japan with Delta Blues (Jpn) and Pop Rock (Jpn).

The list goes on, with the highlights including success in Dubai for dual Horse of the Year Gentildonna (Jpn), later followed by another queen of the Japanese turf, Almond Eye (Jpn), through to last year's Sheema Classic romp for Equinox and Dubai World Cup victory for Ushba Tesoro (Jpn). And let's not forget the first two Japanese-trained winners at the Breeders' Cup of 2021, Marche Lorraine (Jpn) and Loves Only You (Jpn). The Arc still eludes Japan, but that omission will surely be rectified before too long.

"In Hong Kong, or in the Middle East, due to the difference of racing surface, Japanese horses have been really strong, but we have not been that strong in Europe, though we still want to reach out there as well," says Kusano.

The **nominations for the Dubai World Cup** were announced this week with an ominous list of 200 entries from Japan, including the co-top-rated filly in the world, Liberty Island, and defending World Cup hero Ushba Tesoro.

"I would say we will have 20-plus runners in the end," he adds. "The system in Saudi, Dubai and Qatar is very simple and it

makes it easy to plan for the Japanese horsemen, and these big races in February and March work well for the connections."

As for Japan's own showcase race, the Japan Cup was broadcast live in Britain for the first time last year and there are plans in place to expand that commitment to show more Japanese races to European audiences.

Anyone who has seen clips of Japanese racing fans on social media or elsewhere will understand the level of support racing enjoys in the country, and without the need of extra-curricular enticements such as post-racing concerts. Though, like many other racing nations, attendance figures have dropped, there

were still almost 86,000 people on course for Equinox's swansong. That, however, is a long way short of the record crowd figure set at Tokyo in 1990 of 196,517.

"Luckily racing is still very much accepted in Japan," Kusano says. "The largest difference between racing in Japan and other countries is that we are purely fan-engaged. We truly race for the fans, while working closely with the [horses'] connections. If you don't value the fans you will lose the interest in the sport. So that's our main focus, and I think it is one thing we have been successful in doing.

"People in Japan purely come to watch the races, and to see the horses and the jockeys."

They also have the chance to say goodbye to their equine heroes, with on-course retirement ceremonies for the star names a regular feature.

Equinox was given his own grand send-off at Nakayama three weeks after his final triumph in the Japan Cup.

"That's another important thing, for us to educate fans that it is the cycle of the pedigree," Kusano says. "It's sad when one great horse retires, however, that blood will continue and be passed on to the next generation, and that's really the beauty of horse racing. It's a basic thing but it's really important to keep getting that simple information and image across to the fans."



Cesario after taking the American Oaks | Benoit Photo

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Defeated 11 fellow G1 winners in the G1 Platinum Jubilee.



Three 6f G1s earlier in his career than any horse since Scat Daddy's sire.



**Darley**



## The JRA Turns 70 Cont.

Kusano has spent the last two years based in Britain and is now a familiar face at racecourses around Europe. While many in this part of world look on with envy at the strength of the racing and breeding industry in Japan, he has learnt to appreciate elements of British racing.

He says, "The beauty of it is that you have a lot of opportunities for every horse that's bred. You have 59 racecourses and a lot of handicap racing. If you look at it from the other side, as an owner, not all owners have great horses. But if you have a horse you are excited about it, whatever the horse's rating, and there is always a place for him to compete. So for that reason, I think the UK is an excellent place for giving lots of different horses and owners a chance to compete and be involved in the racing industry. That's what I have found fascinating, and it's what we do not have in Japanese racing."

Kusano adds, "The culture, the history and the equality for racehorses and owners, that's what has interested me."

Of the two tiers of racing in Japan, the elite JRA circuit is staged across 10 racecourses and incorporating all the major Group 1 contests. The JRA also operates the two training centres, Miho in the east of Japan, and Ritto in the west. Each

has stabling for around 2,200 horses in training.

The second tier of more regional racing is the National Association of Racing (NAR), which is operated under the control of local governments in 14 areas and staged on dirt.

While obtaining an owner's licence for the JRA is subject to wealth and suitability checks, the rise of racing clubs has enabled a greater number of people to feel closer to the action. Silk Racing, which owns Equinox, Almond Eye and the dual G1 Hong Kong Vase winner Glory Vase (Jpn) among many others, has several hundred members involved in each horse.

"The racing clubs have certainly helped to make more people interested in racing," says Kusano. "In Equinox there were 500 syndicate members and they shared the cost. The syndicate system is very different in Japan as the syndicate members are not regarded as racehorse owners, they are regarded as investors.

"But just visiting a yard, or being involved in a horse race, gives great joy to people. And that's the great advantage of horse racing. I think we need to all spend more effort promoting that special environment."

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Crack stayer Glory Vase winning the Hong Kong Vase in 2019 | Horsephotos

## IN THE HOT SEAT

Adam Ryan

**Adam Ryan**, who assists his father Kevin at their Hambleton Lodge yard in Thirsk, has high hopes for Shamardal colt Inisherin and a rising star on the pony racing circuit.

### Proudest moment of 2023?

Triple Time (Ire) (**Frankel** {GB}) winning the Queen Anne S. at Royal Ascot. He was a horse who we'd always held in the highest regard and it was a proud achievement to not only achieve a Group 1 win but to do it on the biggest stage. He also went straight there without a run and I believe that did elevate that performance.

### What is your biggest ambition for the new year?

Setting goals is quite difficult but to continue our success is probably the most important thing. All winners are important but to be competitive on the biggest stage is what everyone is trying to achieve. It's always a goal to find that Group 1 winner which is so important.

### Give us one horse to follow and why?

Our horse to follow would be Inisherin (GB). He has a wonderful pedigree, being by the late Shamardal and out of a Group 1-winning dam. He ran very well on his debut at Newmarket where the front two pulled a long way clear and always looked the type to progress into a nice three-year-old.

### And a young person in the industry to keep an eye on...

A young lad called Mason Paetel. He isn't actually in the

industry just yet, but we saw him win a pony race at York last season and met him and his family afterwards. He looks like he could be a bright star in the future.

### Who do you think will be champion first-season sire this year?

This is always a difficult one and it looks to be a very good crop this year. Obviously, Pinatubo (Ire) would be very hard to look past, a wonderful racehorse with the pedigree to match. Hello Youmzain (Fr) has also produced some good-looking stock. He was a very good sprinter and also had a great mind. I'm sure he

can make a very positive start to his stallion career if passing that on to his progeny.

### And the best value stallion in Europe?

We've had a lot of luck with Kodi Bear (Ire) and last season Room Service (Ire) proved to be a cracking two-year-old, winning the valuable sales race at Doncaster. We are hopeful he could continue his progression this year and potentially take the step into pattern company.



Adam Ryan (right) with his father Kevin | *Racingfotos.com*

### What's the one horse you wish you'd bought in 2023?

I think Vandeeek (GB) was very impressive in a short space of time. It will be interesting to see what route he goes down this year, but he could potentially be a sprinting superstar.

### Biggest regret?

I don't really believe in having regrets, but I would say one of the biggest disappointments was The Grey Gatsby (Ire) just getting touched off in the Prince Of Wales's S. at Royal Ascot in 2015. It was agonisingly close and he was a star for us throughout his career, but if he was to lose then there was no better man to beat us than Pat Smullen. **Cont. p8**



## WOULD YOU LIKE TO SUBMIT YOUR MATING PLANS TO TDN EUROPE?

Just identify the mare(s) and which stallion(s) you're going to in 2024, and why.

*We will run a selection of your responses over the coming weeks.*

Email - [garyking@thetdn.com](mailto:garyking@thetdn.com)

TDN EUROPE



## In The Hot Seat Cont.

### Biggest influence on your career?

Obviously, my father and being able to witness first-hand all the intricacies of the sport and business. To work as part of a team alongside him is very special. Stephen Hillen would be a big influence, too. He works alongside my father at the sales. It has been invaluable experience to shadow him and see what it takes to source the right horse.

### If you could sit down for dinner with three people (dead or alive) who would they be and why?

I would probably say some absent friends and family. To have one more evening with them would be the most important dinner to me.

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## EUROPEAN NEWS

### O'Brien Pair Sold To HK Cont. from p1

For O'Brien, he broke his maiden at the Curragh, before running second in both the G2 Futurity S. and G1 National S. to Henry Longfellow (Ire) (Dubawi {Ire}). Successful in an allowance at ParisLongchamp in September, he finished his year with a close second in the G1 Criterium de Saint-Cloud in October.

Sold for 62,000gns out of Book 2 of the Tattersalls October Yearling Sale, Mythology made 320,000gns as a juvenile during the Tattersalls Craven Breeze-Up Sale last April before racing for a Coolmore partnership which included Teme Valley. The second foal of Rely On Me (Ire) (Kyllach {GB}), he was bred by E. Smith



Islandsinthestream (r) | Racingfotos.com

and Cloneymore Farm. Second to Henry Longfellow at the Curragh prior to that colt's group heroics, the bay won a maiden at Galway and ran second in the G3 Prix Francois Boutin in his fifth start and 2-year-old finale. Mythology is kin to G1 Italian Oaks heroine Menhoubah (Dixieland Band).

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## GREAT BRITISH BONUS SCHEME REACHES £13.5M MARK AS 999TH BONUS PAID

The 999th Great British Bonus was paid to the connections of **Miss Bielsa (GB)** (Nathaniel {Ire}) after she won on debut in a maiden fillies' race on Jan. 26. A £50,000gns Tattersalls Book 2 alum, the Alan Byrne-owned Miss Bielsa picked up a £20,000 bonus at Wolverhampton.

The Simon and Ed Crisford trainee is a half-sister to the very first GBB winner, Pelekai (GB) (Kodiac {GB}), who won £10,000 on debut, and to Golden Mayflower (GB) (Golden Horn {GB}), who earned £20,000, also in her first appearance. The trio are out of Pelerin (Ire) (Shamardal), a multiple listed winner. The chestnut is the 763rd filly to have secured at least one GBB bonus, with 166 multiple GBB bonus winners. Byrne is one of 562 owners who have seen success with GBB, while her breeder, Newsells Park Stud, is one of 454 who have bred a winning filly.

Philip Newton, the Chairman of the TBA, which runs the scheme, said, "At a superficial level, GBB is supporting the entire industry with immediate financial rewards, but it's doing so much more than that: it's encouraging racing in Britain; it's encouraging more fillies to be tested on the track; it's incentivising the use of British-based stallions; it's creating a demand and increasing the value of British-bred fillies at the sales; it's doing so much and exceeding expectations. It is showing that well thought out and carefully managed incentives can--and do--work."

Since the scheme's launch, the value of British-bred fillies at sales has increased 16.3%; 13.4% for Flat fillies and 26.5% for NH fillies, according to a study by PWC.

He added, "We're truly grateful to the Horserace Betting Levy Board (HBLB) for its unwavering support of the Great British Bonus. The HBLB not only provides £3.5 million in annual funding to the programme, but also plays a vital role in its management through its representatives on the GBB Management Group. Its continued partnership is instrumental in ensuring the longevity and effectiveness of the scheme."

The deadline to register 2022 Flat-bred fillies for stage 3 is Feb. 28, 2024. For more information on the programme and to register a filly, please visit the [GBB website](#).

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# DUAL CHAMPION 2YO SIRE, SIRING CHAMPIONS!

## LITTLE BIG BEAR

(European Champion 2YO)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Phoenix S.-Gr.1
- 1<sup>st</sup> Sandy Lane S.-Gr.2
- 1<sup>st</sup> Anglesey S.-Gr.3
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Commonwealth Cup-Gr.1

New for 2024

## BLACKBEARD

(Cartier Champion 2YO)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Middle Park S.-Gr.1
- 1<sup>st</sup> Prix Morny-Gr.1
- 1<sup>st</sup> Prix Robert Papin-Gr.2

Early first foals are impressing

## ARIZONA

- 1<sup>st</sup> Coventry S.-Gr.2
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Dewhurst S.-Gr.1

First 2YOs to run in 2024

## TEN SOVEREIGNS

(European Champion 3YO Sprinter)

- 1<sup>st</sup> July Cup-Gr.1
- 1<sup>st</sup> Middle Park S.-Gr.1
- 1<sup>st</sup> Round Tower S.-Gr.3

11 Blacktype 2YOs in 2023,  
more than any other first crop sire



European Champion 2YO Sire in 2022 and 2023

# NO NAY NEVER

32 Stakes winners from his first 4 crops, conceived at fees from €17,500 to €25,000

9 juvenile Stakes winners in 2023

2023 yearlings sold for €610,000, €550,000, €525,000, €520,000, €470,000 etc

## COOLMORE





Miss Bielsa's half-sister and first GBBS winner Pelekai  
*Racingfotos.com*

## NINE RUNNERS DECLARED FOR CROWN PRINCE'S CUP

Three British-trained runners, plus two in the Godolphin blue, feature in a nine-strong field for the Listed Crown Prince's Cup (Sponsored by Cebarco) at the Rashid Equestrian and Horseracing Club on Friday, February 2.

Charlie Appleby, who won the race in 2023 with Warren Point (GB) (Dubawi {Ire}), saddles a leading contender again this year in the shape of the four-year-old **Local Dynasty (Ire)** (Dubawi {Ire}), who was last seen running out an emphatic winner of a handicap at Meydan. His vanquished rivals on that occasion included the same owner's **Passion And Glory (Ire)** (Cape Cross {Ire}), who will be back in familiar surroundings in Bahrain as he tries to reverse the form in the Crown Prince's Cup. Trained by Saeed Bin Suroor, Passion And Glory was second in the G3 Bahrain International Trophy in 2022 before winning the Listed His Majesty The King's Cup the following year.

The British challenge is made up of three horses who will also be familiar to local racegoers having taken part in the Bahrain Turf Series during the winter. The Ian Williams-trained **Duc De Kent (Fr)** (Zelzal {Fr}) has been beaten in his two starts, but **Isle Of Jura (GB)** (New Approach {Ire}) and **Lucander (Ire)** (**Footstepsinthesand** {GB}) have both been among the winners for George Scott and George Baker, respectively. Lucander came out on top by a short head when the pair met most recently, but Isle Of Jura is better off at the weights in the Crown Prince's Cup, leaving Scott optimistic of another bold showing in the familiar colours of His Highness Shaikh Nasser's Victorious Racing.

"Isle Of Jura has not surprised me in terms of how well he has done in Bahrain," said Scott. "He has really thrived in the

conditions and the lovely fast ground was always going to suit him.

"The plan was always to progress from the Bahrain Turf Series to the Cup races and this [2000m] is his distance, so I am very hopeful of a big run. It would mean a great deal to His Highness Shaikh Nasser to win a race as prestigious as the Crown Prince's Cup."

**Rollajam (Ire)** (Belardo {Ire}) will also sport the silks of Victorious Racing and is one of two runners for leading local trainer Fawzi Nass along with Bahrain Turf Series winner **Zagato (GB)** (**Frankel** {GB}). The home defence is completed by Allan Smith's **American Flag (Ire)** (**Sea The Stars** {Ire}) and the Jaber Ramadhan-trained **Sovereign Spirit (GB)** (Le Havre {Ire}) on another huge day in the Bahrain racing calendar, with two Bahrain Turf Series races and the Bahrain Derby and Bahrain Oaks also featuring on the card.

The declared runners for the 2024 Crown Prince's Cup can be found [here](#).

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Isle Of Jura in action in Bahrain | *The Bahrain Turf Club*

## BLUE BRESIL COLT TOPS FEBRUARY NH SALE AT FAIRYHOUSE

Walshtown Stables' yearling colt by Blue Bresil (Fr) brought a sale-topping €62,000 from Glenvale Stud during the Tattersalls Ireland February National Hunt Sale on Tuesday.

The son of Maryota (Fr) (Martaline {GB}) (lot 113) is a half-brother to G1 Tolworth Novices' Hurdle third Mr Glass (Ire) (Sholokhov {Ire}). Under the second dam is multiple Grade 1-winning hurdler Yanworth (GB) (Norse Dancer {Ire}).

From the same consignment was another Blue Bresil colt (lot 7) which attracted a winning bid of €50,000 from Niall Bleahen.

[Cont. p10](#)



Tuesday's top lot--a son of Blue Bresil | Tattersalls Ireland

### Blue Bresil Colt Stars Cont.

The bay is a half-brother to G1 Ellier Champion Novice Chase winner Feronily (Ire) (Getaway {Ger}), as the duo are out of Vickeeto (Ire) (Old Vic {GB}).

Walk In The Park (Ire)'s son of Fleur d'Ainay (Fr) (Poliglote {GB}) (lot 66) caught the eye of Grange Stud at €43,000. His dam captured a Grade 1 chase in France, and is already responsible for Zurekin (Ire) (Martaline {GB}), a listed winner and third in the G2 Prix La Barka Hurdle.

The one-day sale grossed €1,039,200 for 93 sold from 162 offered (57%). The average was €11,174 (-10%) and the median was €7,000 (-18%).

Tattersalls Ireland's CEO Simon Kerins said, "The February National Hunt Sale marked a satisfactory start to the trade for the beginning of 2024. We would also like to congratulate Walshtown Stables for yet again bringing a quality draft to market."

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## BRITAIN

### Tuesday's Results:

**2nd-Southwell, £7,300, Novice, 1-30, 3yo/up, 8f 13y (AWT), 1:40.87, st.**

**SOLOMON (GB) (g, 3, Siyouni {Fr}--Ribbons {GB} {G1SW-Fr, GSW & G1SP-Ire, SW & GSP-Eng, \$590,119}, by Manduro {Ger}),** a half-brother to the G3 Queens Cup winner and G1 Melbourne Cup runner-up Soulcombe (GB) (Frankel {GB}), was a promising runner-up on debut over seven furlongs here earlier this month and raced just behind the early pace. Shaken up to gain a slight edge two out, the 1-5 favourite drew away to score

by 2 1/4 lengths from Nashid (Ire) (Siyouni {Fr}). The G1 Prix Jean Romanet and G2 Blandford S.-winning dam, whose 2-year-old colt Scoville (GB) (Too Darn Hot {GB}) was a 200,000gns purchase by Haggas at Tatts Book 1, is a half to the G2 Duke Of Cambridge S. Runner-up Tribute Act (GB) (Exceed And Excel {Aus}) from the family of the brilliant champion Soviet Song (Ire) (Marju {Ire}). Sales history: 60,000gns RNA Ylg '22 TATOCT; €130,000 2yo '23 ARQMAY. Lifetime Record: 2-1-1-0, \$7,358. O-Sir Martyn Arbib, Ben Arbib, Chris Budgett; B-Pursuit of Success LLC (GB); T-William Haggas.

## FRANCE

### Tuesday's Results:

**6th-Pornichet, €22,000, Cond, 1-30, 3yo, 10 1/2f (AWT), 2:21.68, st.**

**SIMADA (GB) (f, 3, Le Havre {Ire}--Simiyna {Ire}, by Holy Roman Emperor {Ire}),** who was off the mark at Lyon La Soie earlier this month, struggled with the early crawl but consented to go slow enough to shadow the leader. Given the office turning for home, the 6-4 second favourite had command a furlong out and readily asserted to score by 2 1/2 lengths from Linaria (Fr) (Toronado {Ire}). The dam, who also has a 2-year-old filly by Kingman (GB) and a yearling filly by Night Of Thunder (Ire), is kin to four black-type performers headed by the Kingman's G3 Kevin Heffernan S. and G3 Amethyst S. winner Sinawann (Ire). Her dam Simawa (Ire) (Anabaa) is a half-sister to the operation's stellar Derby and Arc-winning champion Sinndar (Ire). Lifetime Record: 3-2-0-0, €21,500. **Video, sponsored by FanDuel TV.**

O-H H The Aga Khan; B-S.A. Aga Khan (GB); T-Francis-Henri Graffard.

### ADDITIONAL MAIDEN WINNERS:

**Make A Wish (Fr), f, 3, Morandi (Fr)--Adhere, by Mizzen Mast.** Cagnes-sur-Mer, 1-30, 10f (AWT), 2:04.84. B-H Rousseau (FR).

**Karriewhitchit (GB), f, 4, Dubawi (Ire)--Kailani (GB), by Monsun (Ger).** Cagnes-sur-Mer, 1-30, 12 1/2ft, 2:45.14. B-Godolphin (GB). \*7,000gns HRA '23 TATDEC.

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## WORLDWIDE NEWS

### GABBEDY SNARES 800K WOOTTON BASSETT FILLY AT KARAKA *by James Thomas/TTR AusNZ*

The good vibes continued at the New Zealand Bloodstock Karaka Yearling Sale on Tuesday as a record-busting Book 1 drew to a close with a lively third and final session.

#### *At A Glance:*

- At the close of trade on the final day of Book 1, the aggregate finished at NZ\$79,585,000, which is a huge increase on last year's edition which finished with a gross of NZ\$70,063,000. In 2021, the sale finished with total receipts of NZ\$63,127,500.
- The average for the sale has risen to NZ\$168,257 compared to the NZ\$151,980 recorded at last year's edition. In 2021 it was NZ\$146,808.
- The median figure dropped from last year to NZ\$120,000. In 2023, it was NZ\$130,000, while in 2022, it came in at NZ\$100,000.
- New Zealand Bloodstock reported they had sold 473 lots at a clearance rate of 78%. This figure is not dissimilar to last year (79%) and 2022 (77%).
- The top-seller on Day 3 was Lot 513--a **Wootton Bassett (GB)** filly from Via Napoli (Aus). She was from the Curraghmore draft and realised NZ\$800,000, with Damon Gabbedy of Belmont Bloodstock Agency (FBAA) buying.
- The most expensive colt on the final day of Book 1 was by Savabeel (Aus), Lot 562. Offered by Little Avondale Stud, he was knocked down to Bjorn Baker Racing / Clarke Bloodstock (FBAA) for NZ\$525,000. The colt is out of Alam Mo Na (Aus).
- The Book 1 sale-topper was Lot 21--a Proisir (Aus) filly out of Donna Marie (Aus), which was consigned by Hallmark Stud. Moody Racing went to NZ\$1.6 million for her.

- Waikato Stud finished the sale as the leading vendor by aggregate for the ninth time in the past 10 years. The Matamata-based farm sold 55 yearlings, netting NZ\$8,730,000 in receipts.

- Hallmark Stud finished the sale as the leading vendor by average (three or more), having sold 11 yearlings for an average of NZ\$294,100.

- Savabeel was the leading sire by aggregate. He had 41 yearlings make a collective NZ\$10,720,000.

- Snitzel (Aus) reigned supreme in terms of sires by average (three or more). He had three yearlings average NZ\$425,000.

- **Wootton Bassett** is the leading first-season sire by average (three or more). His seven yearlings sold at an average price of NZ\$328,600. Hello Youmzain (Fr) claimed the freshman honours in terms of aggregate; he grossed NZ\$5,825,000.

- For the 19th consecutive year, David Ellis was the leading buyer. The Te Akau boss signed for 25 yearlings, spending NZ\$5.7 million at an average of NZ\$228,000.

- Buyers from the Waikato region of New Zealand spent NZ\$16,255,000 on 111 yearlings at an average of NZ\$146,400. Shoppers from New South Wales purchased 77 yearlings, spending NZ\$14,622,500, while Victorians signed for 95 yearlings, with a total spend of NZ\$15,440,000.



Damon Gabbedy | Bronwen Healy

### **Lot 513: Wootton Bassett (GB) x Via Napoli, filly, NZ\$800,000**

The day three session-topper has the kind of profile that makes the racing world feel like a small place as a filly by a British-bred stallion who is related to an American Grade I winner was sold to an Australian agent on behalf of a Hong Kong client. **Cont. p12**

**NZB Cont.**

The youngster is from the first Southern Hemisphere-bred crop of Coolmore shuttler **Wootton Bassett** and was bred by John Camilleri's Fairway Thoroughbreds from Via Napoli, a winning daughter of Fastnet Rock (Aus) whose first foal is the Group 3-placed Petrucci (Aus).

The dam is a sibling to three black-type winners, most notably G1 Railway S. scorer Gathering (Aus), while the Group 3-winning Florentina (Aus) is better known as the dam of In Italian (GB), who won four turf Grade 1s in the US for Chad Brown and Peter Brant.

Belmont Bloodstock's (FBAA) Damon Gabbedy secured the blue-blooded filly on behalf of Cheung Shun Ching.

The well-travelled agent said the filly stacked up favourably with the stock **Wootton Bassett** has produced during his time standing in France and, latterly, Ireland.

"There was a lot of competition," said Gabbedy after signing for the Curraghmore-consigned youngster.

"She's a beautiful filly from a proper pedigree. I go to France with my role with Arqana every year, so I've seen a lot of good Wootton Bassetts, and this is one of the most outstanding types I've seen.

"And I think the pedigree speaks for itself. She's closely related to a champion, In Italian, and from a proper pedigree with good depth. She's from a great breeder, John Camilleri, and raised at Segenhoe, so hopefully we'll have a bit of luck with her."

Gabbedy added, "I bought her for a new client from Hong Kong, so that's good. We don't know who the trainer is yet, so we'll just leave her here for a little while and figure that out in the next month or two. She'll go to Australia."

**Lot 562: Savabeel x Alam Mo Na, colt, NZ\$525,000**

Little Avondale Stud has been a source of some significant winners for Bjorn Baker down the years and the New South Wales-based trainer dipped into the draft again on Tuesday when going to NZ\$525,000 for this well-related colt.

The youngster is the second foal out of Alam Mo Na, a daughter of High Chaparral (Ire) who in turn is out of Queen Of

The Hill (Aus) (Danehill), a Group 3-winning sibling to Northern Meteor (Aus).

"Thrilled to get him," said Baker.

"Obviously I've had a fair bit of luck with the Little Avondale graduates over the years. We really liked him. He was the colt that we came here and wanted. We had to wait a bit longer--I like to strike on the first day--but he's a lovely looking colt and he looks like he's a chance to get up and go early.

"Savabeel's one of the great stallions; he had a strong sale again. They're great horses and they win races. The more Savabeels I get, the more I'll be able to stay competitive in Sydney, and that's what it's about."

Among the horses Baker has sourced from Little Avondale are the Group 3-winning pair Belluci Babe (NZ) (Per Incanto) and Addictive Nature (Aus), who is also by Savabeel.

"I was lucky enough to get a good Savabeel off Little Avondale

a few years back called Addictive Nature, and this guy reminded me a lot of him," Baker continued.

"He's a good-looking horse, plenty of quality, and I can't wait to get him into the stable."

Baker was another buyer to reference the swelling purses on offer in New Zealand, adding: "We'll try and get him underway relatively quickly, and we'll definitely sign up for the Karaka Millions--if not that, maybe we can get him back here for The Kiwi when it's a NZ\$4.5 million race.

There's a lot of good opportunities (in New Zealand) now. I'm just hoping one or two of the good Kiwi trainers in Aussie move home!"

Waikato Stud's eight-time champion Savabeel topped the sires' list by gross receipts. The priciest of the bunch was Lot 442, the filly out of Stolen Gem (Aus) bought by Sheamus Mills for NZ\$650,000 on day two.

**Lot 630: Deep Field (Aus) x Californiasurprise (Aus), colt, NZ\$500,000**

Jamie Richards and Andrew Williams Bloodstock (FBAA) secured their final lot of Book 1 when stretching to NZ\$500,000 for Kaha Nui Farm's son of the retired Deep Field.

The six-figure youngster is out of Californiasurprise, a winning daughter of I Am Invincible (Aus). **Cont. p13**



**Bjorn Baker** | *Ashlea Brennan*



## NZB Cont.

The former Newgate resident Deep Field may not be on active covering duty anymore but he is still having a major influence in Hong Kong, where he was the leading sire in 2022 and 2023. He currently heads this year's charts too, helped in no small part by the G1 Stewards' Cup success of Voyage Bubble (Aus).

"First and foremost, he's a beautiful colt," said Richards. "He's a great colour, a lot of quality to him. I saw him when I got here on Friday morning and it's been a long time waiting for him. He's going to end up being a medium-sized horse but he's very athletic. I'm not sure when he'll go up (to Hong Kong) but he'll go back to the farm and we'll get him broken in and educated and we're looking forward to him arriving in Hong Kong at some stage."

"He's beautiful and I'm thrilled to get him. Speed is what they need up there--they've got to be fast. The sire obviously does very well up there, which is important, and we just loved him as a physical, so we're very happy to get him."

That purchase took Richards and Williams's Book 1 haul to six, with the group costing a combined NZ\$2.37 million. The most expensive was Lot 55, the Zoustar (Aus) colt from Elsdon Park (Aus) who brought NZ\$725,000 on day one.

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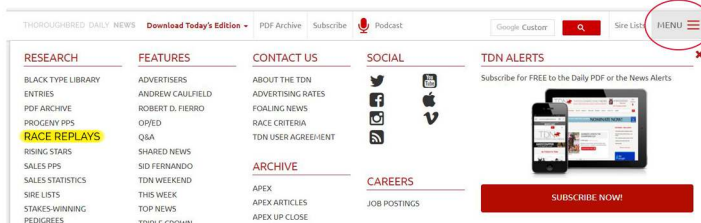
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