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ON THE MARK

Champion Abel Tasman
Has First Breeze of 2018

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ON THE COVER

Bob Baffert trainee Abel Tasman looks out over the track during a morning training session at Del Mar

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CHAMPION ABEL TASMAN HAS FIRST BREEZE OF 2018

By Alicia Wincze Hughes

[@BH_AHughes](#)

The first impression Abel Tasman made in her initial morning of on-site preparation for last year's Longines Kentucky Oaks (G1) was not exactly one that signaled the arrival of a would-be champion on the scene.

"I remember when we took her to Churchill Downs for the Oaks, she was acting like a green 2-year-old—just looking and weaving and looking at everything," trainer Bob Baffert recalled. "And then we galloped her with blinkers the rest of the week just to keep her focused. She just needed a little focusing ... because she brings it every time."

Abel Tasman ended up bringing it all right—from that moment forward her readjusted attention span and focus led to a campaign that saw her win three straight grade 1 contests en route to earning the 2017 Eclipse Award for champion 3-year-old filly. On Feb. 1, the daughter of Quality Road took the first step towards building upon her foundation when she registered her first breeze of this year, going three furlongs in :36 1/5 at Santa Anita Park.

Thursday's workout was the first for Abel Tasman since her runner-up finish in the Nov. 3 Longines Breeders' Cup Distaff (G1) at Del Mar, where she finished just a half-length behind eventual champion older dirt female Forever Unbridled. The bit of freshening she received in the aftermath was



ANNE M. EBERHARDT

Trainer Bob Baffert overseeing the morning training sessions at Del Mar

well-earned as the bay filly went through a seven-race campaign in 2017, where she finished no worse than second while rattling off triumphs in the Kentucky Oaks, Acorn Stakes (G1), and Coaching Club American Oaks (G1).

"She looked great today, that was nothing for her," Baffert said of the move. "Just trying to get back to work and maybe look for something in the spring with her."

Owned by China Horse Club and breeder Clearsky Farms, Abel Tasman was one of two Baffert-trainees to snag year-end honors as her stablemate, West Coast, book-ended the achievement when he was voted champion 3-year-old male. Where West Coast didn't stamp himself within his division until the second half of the year, Abel Tasman has spent much of her young career in the upper percentile of her class.

Previously trained by Simon Callaghan, Abel Tasman captured

the 2016 Starlet Stakes (G1) to cap off her 2-year-old campaign, but was a clear second-best in her first two sophomore outings—a runner-up finish to Unique Bella in the Santa Ysabel Stakes (G3) last March and an 11 3/4-length defeat at the hands of Paradise Woods in the Santa Anita Oaks (G1).

When Hall of Fame jockey Mike Smith had his post-race debrief with Baffert following the Santa Anita Oaks, he confirmed that an equipment tweak might be all his mount needed to move herself into a new stratosphere. And when the pair rallied from the back of the pack to take the Kentucky Oaks by 1 1/4 lengths, her Hall of Fame conditioner knew he had something special on his hands to work with for the months ahead.

"I think the blinkers were a big part of it because she can see a lot of things out there," Baffert said.

(continued on page 6)

KENTUCKY

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CHAMPION ABEL TASMAN HAS FIRST BREEZE OF 2018

(continued from page 4)

"Paradise Woods, I don't know that anyone was going to beat her that day but ... (jockey) Martin Garcia had been working her and he said he thought she needed blinkers, and then Mike came back and was like 'Man, she was looking at everything.'

"She actually reminds me a lot of (Triple Crown winner) American Pharoah because she's so smart. And she tries hard every time, that's what we love about her. That's the thing with the good ones, they try hard every time."

Baffert mentioned the La Troienne Stakes (G1) at Churchill Downs in May as a possible starting point for Abel Tasman this spring. Given how well the 4-year-old filly handled shipping, making starts at six different tracks last year, a myriad of options should be on the table for 2018 once she gets her competitive feet wet.

"She runs really well on those East Coast-type tracks," Baffert said. "She likes a deeper track. She runs well here, but California is really a speed-laden type of track. But she'll run anywhere though."

While Abel Tasman is getting back to work, West Coast and their fellow grade 1-winning stablemate Collected are cooling their heels momentarily following their efforts in the Jan. 27 Pegasus World Cup Invitational Stakes (G1) at Gulfstream Park. Baffert said Collected, who faded to seventh after setting the early pace, is getting a few weeks off at a farm in Ocala while West Coast, who finished a game second behind Gun Runner, is "just chilling" and remains under consideration for a possible start in the Dubai World Cup Sponsored by Emirates Airline (G1) in March.

"They actually came out of it really well," Baffert said of the duo. "I think Collected ... he just went really fast early and got tired at the end. I thought he'd run better than that. But they're still going to be a great 1-2 punch in the summer." **BH**

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—Bob Baffert, trainer

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Sales Update

FASIG-TIPTON KENTUCKY WINTER MIXED

ARMY MULE'S WIN TIMELY FOR HALF SISTER ENTERED IN SALE

By Ron Mitchell

🐦 @BH_RMitchell

Army Mule's scintillating return to competition in near track-record time at Gulfstream Park Jan. 31 couldn't have come at a better time for Mike Recio and South Point Sales, which is offering the colt's half sister at the Fasig-Tipton winter mixed sale next week.

Returning from a nine-month layoff that followed an impressive victory in his career debut for St. Elias Stable and trainer Todd Pletcher, the

4-year-old son of Friesan Fire won the \$51,000 optional claiming allowance by 7 1/2 lengths in 1:08.87 for six furlongs over a fast track, not far from the track record of 1:08.12 set by Big Drama in 2011.

"He's a special talent," Pletcher said, following Wednesday's victory. "He broke a little slow, (being) a little rusty first time off the layoff, but recovered quickly and put himself in a beautiful spot and won impressively in a fast time and seemed to be doing it well in hand."

(continued on page 9)



COGLIANESE PHOTOS/LAUREN KING

In his second start and first since April 2017, Army Mule streaks to a 7 1/2-length victory Jan. 31 at Gulfstream Park



Sales Update

FASIG-TIPTON KENTUCKY WINTER MIXED

ARMY MULE'S WIN TIMELY FOR HALF SISTER ENTERED IN SALE

(continued from page 8)

Purchased by Crupi's New Castle for \$825,000 at the 2016 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic 2-year-olds in training sale, Army Mule made his first start last April, romping to an 8 1/2-length triumph over older horses going 6 1/2 furlongs at Belmont Park.

South Point's Recio was impressed by Army Mule when he went through the sale ring as a juvenile and went in search of any of the colt's relatives, resulting in the private acquisition of She's Overwhelming, Army Mule's half sister by Albert the Great who earned \$64,129 during five seasons.

In foal to Overanalyze, the WinStar stallion who was the leading first-crop sire of 2017, She's

Overwhelming is consigned by South Point as Hip 429 during the Feb. 6 second session at Fasig-Tipton. Produced from the stakes-winning Crafty Prospector mare Crafty Toast, Pennsylvania-bred She's Overwhelming is a half sister to two stakes-placed runners.

"(Army Mule) has always had a lot of hype behind him and that is the reason I acquired her," Recio said. "I thought Army Mule was an exceptional 2-year-old when I saw him at the sale in Maryland. I like to track mares and half sisters throughout the year of the horses I like when I go to these 2-year-old sales. I knew Army Mule was doing very well, but he went on the shelf not long after I bought her. But she's a beautiful mare, very attractive, so I wasn't worried that I wouldn't get out (financially) eventually."

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“He has everything you want in a foal. I'd love to own him!”

Paul Shanahan

Pictured at Coolmore on Tuesday at just 12 hours old, a colt ex. Dream The Blues (dam of G1-winning 2YO in 2017 Sioux Nation) bred by John Halley

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Sales Update

FASIG-TIPTON KENTUCKY WINTER MIXED

ARMY MULE'S WIN TIMELY FOR HALF SISTER ENTERED IN SALE

(continued from page 9)

Recio said he bred She's Overwhelming to Overanalyze because he had a season to the Arkansas Derby (G1) winner. The horseman's interest in Overanalyze was based in large part on the success of the stallion's sire Dixie Union.

"I'm a big Dixie Union fan," Recio said. "I used to help Diamond A Racing (which raced Dixie Union in partnership with Herman Sarkowsky) when I worked at Taylor Made ... I got to be around a lot of Dixie Union foals and fell in love with his

progeny. Now, (Dixie Union) has become such a good broodmare sire and hopefully sire of sires. Also, WinStar does the right thing with their stallions, and you know at all price points they're going support you in the sales ring and they're going to get the right amount of mare numbers to their studs. When they offered the breeding right program it was a no-brainer and I had heard good things about how (Overanalyze's) 2-year-olds were training, so it all made sense."

Although She's Overwhelming's catalog page does not reflect Army Mule's latest success, Recio said he is confident South Point's personnel and Fasig-Tipton will make potential buyers aware of it. **BH**

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“She’s well put together and looks like a runner”

Richard Kent of Kaizen Sales

Pictured at Jason and Ashley Schappert's Leading Edge Farm, a filly out of the Tiznow mare Havelsee

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STEWART MULLING OPTIONS FOR SEEKING THE SOUL

By BloodHorse Staff

A trip to Meydan Racecourse for the \$10 million Dubai World Cup Sponsored by Emirates Airline (G1) in March is on the table for grade 1 winner Seeking the Soul, following his fifth-place run in the Pegasus World Cup Invitational Stakes (G1) at Gulfstream Park Jan. 27.

Trainer Dallas Stewart said Feb. 1 he was pleased with the effort from the son of Perfect Soul last weekend and would consider the overseas venture as long as the bay horse continues to progress. Prior to his run in the Pegasus World Cup—which was won by reigning Horse of the Year Gun Runner—Seeking the Soul captured the Clark Handicap presented by Norton Healthcare (G1) at Churchill Downs in November.

"He looks good and we're really happy with him," Stewart said. "It was a very tough race, a lot of champions in there. We'll figure out where we'll plot our next course and go from there. We'll look at Dubai; we could possibly look that way."

Stewart also went on to discuss 2017 champion older dirt female Forever Unbridled, winner of last year's Longines Breeders' Cup Distaff (G1) at Del Mar. Stewart said the daughter of Unbridled's Song could



COGLIANESE PHOTOS/DAVID BECKER

Seeking the Soul arrives at Gulfstream Park ahead of the Pegasus World Cup

return to the work tab at some point in the near future and is also under consideration for a trip to Dubai. The 6-year-old mare has not breezed since Dec. 11, when she went a half-mile in :50 2/5.

"(She is) training well so we'll probably have plans to work her pretty soon," Stewart said. "We'll try to get a game plan of where we'll come with her. She's nominated to the Dubai (World) Cup and there are a lot of options on the table. We'll figure it out as we go."

Both Seeking the Soul and Forever Unbridled are owned and bred by Charles Fipke. **BH**

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GOOD MAGIC HEADS 360 EARLY NOMINEES TO TRIPLE CROWN

By Alicia Wincze Hughes

[@BH_AHughes](#)

Headed by reigning juvenile male champion Good Magic, a total of 360 3-year-olds were made eligible to compete during the early nomination phase in the 2018 Triple Crown races: the \$2 million Kentucky Derby Presented by Woodford Reserve (G1), the \$1.5 million Preakness Stakes (G1) and the \$1.5 million Belmont Stakes (G1).

The total is down 14% from last year's early phase of Triple Crown nominations, which attracted 419 horses, and is the lowest number of early nominations since 2005 which had 358. The level of decline was somewhat of a surprise to officials, given the level of parity in the 3-year-old division last season, although the contraction of the North American foal crop was cited as a likely contributing circumstance.

According to statistics from The Jockey Club, the registered foal crop for 2015 was estimated at 20,850,

a decline of 2.5% percent compared with 2014 figures.

"I think we're just looking to see, as an industry, kind of where we are right now with the foal crop and things of that nature," said John Asher, vice president of racing communications for Churchill Downs. "That's obviously been some factor. But the key is ... while thinking about it a few weeks ago, I would have thought the number would have been a little higher than that, but if you look at the 360, we've got the right 360. We've got all the right horses on there. It's got a tremendous mix of international horses and horses that are well intended from people hoping to be here and compete in the series.

"I think 360 is still a good number. We all as an industry would like to see it higher, but it's a good number, especially looking at the quality."

An additional six Thoroughbreds were made eligible during the late nomination period last year to raise the overall total to 425. The late nomination period, which requires a payment of \$6,000 for each nominated 3-year-old, has started and will continue through March 19.

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Reigning juvenile champion Good Magic chases down Solomini to take the Breeders' Cup Juvenile at Del Mar

GOOD MAGIC HEADS 360 EARLY NOMINEES TO TRIPLE CROWN

(continued from page 12)

"For sure, I'd love to see the number jump a little higher," Asher said. "Hopefully when we get to the second closing, we'll see some new names pop in there and some new stars emerge between now and then. So there are still some opportunities."

The Chad Brown-trained Good Magic, winner of the Sentient Jet Breeders' Cup Juvenile, is joined on the list of early Triple Crown nominees by accomplished stars that include Ruis Racing's Bolt d'Oro, whose only blemish in four 2017 races was a third-place finish behind Good Magic; and Solomini, the Breeders' Cup Juvenile runner-up owned by Zayat Stables and trained by Hall of Famer Bob Baffert, who teamed in 2015 to send American Pharoah to the first sweep of the Triple Crown races since 1978. One of Solomini's three losses was a disqualification from first to third in December's Los Alamitos CashCall Futurity (G1).

The 2018 Triple Crown will open May 5 with the 1 1/4-mile Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs in Louisville, Ky. The Preakness, the Triple Crown's 1 3/16-mile second leg, is set for May 19 at Pimlico Race Course in Baltimore. The 150th running of the Belmont Stakes, the series' 1 1/2-mile final leg, is scheduled for June 9 at Belmont Park in Elmont, N.Y.

Early nominations to the 2018 Triple Crown closed Jan. 20. Each nomination was accompanied by payment of a \$600 fee to make the individual Thoroughbred eligible to compete in any or all of the Triple Crown contests.

Following American Pharoah's celebrated 2015 Triple Crown sweep, each of the past six Triple Crown races has had a different winner. Last year Always Dreaming opened the series with a victory in the Kentucky Derby, but the Preakness was won by Cloud Computing, a colt who had not competed in the opening Triple Crown jewel. Last year's series was completed with a victory by Tapwrit in the Belmont Stakes.

Both Always Dreaming and Tapwrit were trained by Todd Pletcher, who became the first conditioner to earn Triple Crown victories with different horses in a calendar year since D. Wayne Lukas achieved the feat

in back-to-back seasons in 1995-96.

After winning two Triple Crown events in 2017, Pletcher led all trainers by making 37 horses Triple Crown-eligible during this year's early nomination phase. Pletcher, honored seven times with the Eclipse Award as America's top trainer, has five wins in U.S. classics that include a pair of Kentucky Derby triumphs and three Belmont Stakes victories. Baffert, who has a total of 12 triumphs in Triple Crown races, was next with 32 nominations. Hall of Famer Steve Asmussen nominated 17 horses and was followed by Dale Romans (11) and Mark Casse (10). Aidan O'Brien led international trainers with six nominations, headed by Mendelssohn and U S Navy Flag.

Zayat Stables led all owners with 12 Triple Crown nominees and edged WinStar Farm by one for the top spot in that tightly bunched category. Four owners tied at 10 nominations: China Horse Club International; Charles Fipke; Michael Tabor, Susan Magnier, and Derrick Smith; and West Point Thoroughbreds. Calumet Farm—winner of a record 17 Triple Crown races that includes the historic sweeps by Whirlaway and Citation—tied with St. Elias Stable at nine nominees, one more than Winchell Thoroughbreds.

Fipke bred 11 of the early Triple Crown nominees to lead all breeders, edging Gainesway Thoroughbreds, which bred 10 nominees. They were followed by Godolphin (9), WinStar Farm (9) and Calumet Farm (6).

Tapit, the sire of Belmont Stakes winner Tapwrit and Creator (2016), led all sires with 22 early nominees. Pioneer of the Nile, the sire of Triple Crown winner American Pharoah, was next with 12 nominees, and was followed by Candy Ride and Curlin (11), Into Mischief (10) and Medaglia d'Oro and the late Scat Daddy (9).

The 360 nominated Triple Crown candidates include 324 colts, 20 geldings, 12 ridglings, and four fillies. Gary Barber's Ontario-bred Wonder Gadot is the most accomplished of the four nominated fillies.

Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf (G1T) winner Mendelssohn, a \$3 million yearling purchase at Keeneland's 2016 September Sale, is the most expensive sales purchase among the early nominees. A group of seven nominated seven-figure auction purchases also includes Good Magic, who sold for \$1 million during the same 2016 sale.

(continued on page 14)

GOOD MAGIC HEADS 360 EARLY NOMINEES TO TRIPLE CROWN

(continued from page 13)

The nominees include 288 horses bred in Kentucky, which is 80% of the overall total. Florida was next with 14 nominees and was followed by Maryland (10), New York (9) and California (5). International nominees include seven bred in Canada, six in Ireland and two apiece from Great Britain and Japan.

Nineteen of the nominees are based outside North America, including 13 from Europe, three from Dubai and a trio of Japanese-based runners: Cattleya Sho winner Ruggero, Mominoki Sho winner Work and Love and unraced Copano Kicking.

"We expect that number (of international) nominees to grow, especially if one of these horses can come in and have success in one of the Triple Crown races," Asher said. "We've had varying levels of that over the years, but not a tremendous number of horses that have come from abroad and run well in these races as Go and Go did in the (1990) Belmont Stakes. But you have to think it's only a matter of time."

The Kentucky Derby field has been limited to 20 starters since 1975 and the horses that enter the starting gate for its 2018 renewal will again be determined by points earned in the Road to the Kentucky Derby eligibility system, which debuted in 2013. If entries to the Derby total more than the


maximum field of 20, up to four also eligible entrants will be permitted. If one or more entrants scratch from the 20-horse Kentucky Derby field prior to 9 a.m. (EDT) May 4, the also-eligible horse or horses with highest preference in the Road to the Kentucky Derby system assume the empty stalls in the starting gate.

The Preakness is limited to 14 starters and the Belmont Stakes permits a maximum field of 16.

Three-year-olds that were not nominated to the Triple Crown during either the early or late nomination phases have a final opportunity to become eligible for the races through payment of a supplemental nomination fee. Due at the time of entry for either the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness, or the Belmont Stakes, the supplemental fee process makes a horse eligible for the remainder of the Triple Crown series. A supplemental nomination at the time of entry to the Kentucky Derby requires payment of \$200,000. The fee is \$150,000 if paid prior to the Preakness or \$50,000 at time of entry to the Belmont Stakes.

Churchill Downs adjusted its entry process in 2014 to permit supplemental nominees to be treated the same as original and late Triple Crown nominees. If one or more supplemental nominees possess sufficient Road to the Kentucky Derby points to qualify for the Kentucky Derby field, they will be allowed to start over original and late nominees with lesser qualifications. Previously Churchill Downs gave preference in all cases to early and late nominees. **BH**

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BLOODHORSE
February 2, 2018 / No. 2

FINAL SHOT
2017 Horse of the Year
Gun Runner goes all in with a rich score in the Pegasus


2017 ECLIPSE AWARDS
OBS WINTER SALE
WITH GENERAL BILL OPPENHEIM

INSTANT ACCESS


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Gun Runner soars in Pegasus World Cup Invitational two days after being named Horse of the Year
by *Alicia Wincze Hughes*



BIG STEP UP
Better stock brings better prices and across-the-board gains at the OBS Winter Mixed Sale
by *Sales Editor Ron Mitchell*



2017 ECLIPSE AWARDS
Alicia Wincze Hughes recaps the January 25 Eclipse Awards held at Gulfstream Park



IN MY OPINION WITH BILL OPPENHEIM
An in-depth look at APEX ratings – Annual Progeny Earnings Index

PHOTOS: COGLIANESE PHOTOS (GUN RUNNER), HORSEPHOTOS.COM/NTRA (ECLIPSE AWARDS), JOE DIORIO (OBS)

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ST PATRICK'S DAY MENDING IN IRELAND FROM TENDON INJURY

By Claire Crosby

[@BH_CNovak](#)

St Patrick's Day, the 3-year-old full brother to Triple Crown winner American Pharoah, is in Ireland for rehabilitation from a tendon injury, a representative from Coolmore confirmed Feb. 1.

The son of Pioneerof the Nile broke his maiden Sept. 2 in a 6 1/2-furlong maiden special weight over the main track at Del Mar after he finished second on debut at the seaside oval for Hall of Fame trainer Bob Baffert Aug. 20. Campaigned by Susan Magnier, St Patrick's Day was a private purchase from breeder Jane Lyon's Summer Wind Farm.

"Bob Baffert sent St Patrick's Day back to Ashford following his maiden win in September due to a tendon injury," said Coolmore's Dermot Ryan. "We decided to seek specialist treatment in England and he is now



St Patrick's Day raced twice, and broke his maiden in September at Del Mar

back rehabilitating in Ireland. All going well, he could be campaigned in Europe this summer."

St Patrick's Day is the fourth foal out of the Yankee Gentleman mare Littleprincessemma. He was preceded by a full sister, Zayat Stables' homebred grade 1-placed American Cleopatra, a \$1.9 million buyback at the 2017 Fasig-Tipton November sale. American Cleopatra was kept by the

Zayats and is in foal to Uncle Mo.

Littleprincessemma, a \$2.1 million purchase by Summer Wind through Taylor Made Sales Agency's consignment to the 2014 Fasig-Tipton November sale, also produced a 2016 Tapit filly named Chasing Yesterday, and foaled another Pioneerof the Nile colt, named Theprinceofthebes, in 2017. **BH**

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REGULATORY CHANGES NOT EXPECTED FOLLOWING LASIX STUDIES

By Frank Angst

[@BH_FAngst](#)

Racing rule changes regarding the pre-race administration of furosemide (Salix, commonly called Lasix) appear unlikely following the results of a pair of studies that assessed the diuretic used to prevent exercise-induced pulmonary hemorrhage.

A study led by Dr. Heather Knych of the Ken L. Maddy Equine Analytical Chemistry Laboratory at the University of California-Davis examined the efficacy of Lasix in preventing or reducing the severity of EIPH if administered 24 hours before a race, as opposed to the current four-hour standard. According to results outlined at the American Association of Equine Practitioners convention in late November, the study determined the four-hour timeframe was the most effective for reducing the severity of EIPH.

Another Lasix study, led by Dr. Warwick Bayly, found some potential for a low dosage of Lasix 24 hours out, combined with controlled access to water in reducing EIPH.

Racing Medication and Testing Consortium executive director Dionne Benson said there has been no discussion at this point on the outcome of the studies. She said the RMTTC is committed to working toward putting the current standard of third-party Lasix administration four hours before the race in place in all racing states.

As one might expect, the results of the study were viewed differently by groups on differing sides of the race-day Lasix issue.

The Jockey Club, which supports federal legislation that would end race-day Lasix, notes that the differences Dr. Knych's study found between the four-hour and 24-hour administration times were in red blood cell counts in bronchoalveolar lavage fluid. The study noted that the EIPH scores did not appear to correlate with the results of RBC counts from the BAL in this study.

"We found it interesting, that when horses were subjected to the most objective manner of determining EIPH, the scientists found no statistical difference between four- and 24-hour Lasix," said Jockey Club executive vice president and executive director Matt Iuliano. "We also found it interesting that the study confirmed that the majority of Thoroughbreds simply do not have sufficient



ANNE M. EBERHARDT

Model rules on race-day Salix, commonly referred to as Lasix, call for administration four hours before a race

clinical signs to even require Lasix in the first place."

The Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association pointed to the study's outcome as support of the current four-hour administration time. National HBPA CEO Eric Hamelback said going into the study that he was not opposed to changing the standard, if science supported the idea of pushing back the administration time, but he believes the outcome supports the current approach.

"Professional horsemen and veterinarians look at the use of Lasix as pro-horse," Hamelback said. "We look at its use as a positive in equine health and welfare and we want what's best for the horse. Lasix is beneficial."

Iuliano noted that the study only found EIPH—in this case defined as endoscopically visible hemorrhage of grade 1 or higher, in 26% of the horses post-race.

"This would certainly explain why the Europeans race so successfully without it," Iuliano said. "This is further demonstrated when studying the lifetime careers of Thoroughbreds, which revealed that EIPH produced no effect on their success on the racetrack."

Hamelback noted that owners and trainers in the United States have the option of racing their horses without race-day Lasix.

"The use of Lasix is not required. It's a choice," Hamelback said. "In the recent Pegasus World Cup (Invitational Stakes, G1), connections had the option of a seven-pound allowance if they raced without it, but all the horses started on Lasix. That's because they each decided that receiving Lasix was in the best interest of their horse. In the U.S. we have that choice."

Funding for the studies was provided by Grayson-Jockey Research Foundation, the AAEP, and a number of tracks. **BH**

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WIDE-OPEN ROBERT B. LEWIS STAKES DRAWS NINE

By *Jeremy Balan*

[@BH_JBalan](#)

With some of the heavy hitters in the 3-year-old male division eyeing targets down the line, the \$150,000 Robert B. Lewis Stakes (G3) came up as a wide-open affair with points toward the Road to the Kentucky Derby on the line Feb. 3 at Santa Anita Park.

Four last-out maiden winners, two maidens, and three horses with recent stakes experience populate the nine-colt field for the 1 1/16-mile Lewis, but none have a stakes win. Kaleem Shah's Inscom came closest last time out Dec. 29 in the Eddie Logan Stakes, but that second-place finish, by a head to Pubilius Syrus, came on grass.

"There's certainly no standout in there, but we also think it's the right time to try (dirt)," said Inscom's trainer, Simon Callaghan. "He ran first time out on dirt (a far-back sixth in September), but numerous things went against him that day. He's always trained well on dirt and has been progressing nicely. And if it doesn't work, it's perfect timing for the (March 17) Pasadena (Stakes)."

Of the recent maiden winners, Spendthrift Farm and Town and Country Racing's Peace may have the most upside. A three-quarter-length winner last time out Dec. 30, the Richard Mandella-trained Violence colt finished behind eventual Smarty Jones Stakes winner Mourinho in their debut sprinting Sept. 30, and also finished runner-up by a head in his second start Nov. 23 to fellow Lewis entrant Shivermetimbers.

The most intriguing maiden appears to be Juddmonte Farms' Regulate, who finished second to Peace Dec. 30, then came back to finish sixth as the 6-5 favorite in a maiden special weight event Jan. 19 at Santa Anita for trainer Bob Baffert.

"When he ran second, that was a nice race. But when he ran the other day, he never really tried at all," Baffert said. "He came out of the race really well and looked really strong when I breezed him (Jan. 30). This time of year, they're basically not tough races yet. I think everybody feels the same way, because it's a big field."

Baffert had Zayat Stables' multiple grade 1-placed Solomini under consideration for the Lewis, but a minor illness that has been making the rounds in the Santa Anita barn area delayed his training in early January. **BH**

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BENOIT PHOTO

Peace wins a maiden special weight race Dec. 30 at Santa Anita



DOLLARS & SENSE

WITH FRANK ANGST

CHARLES TOWN CLASSIC COULD STILL BE A GO

By Frank Angst

[@BH_FAngst](#)

The planned \$1.2 million Charles Town Classic (G2) could be back on the 2018 racing calendar as the West Virginia Racing Commission is scheduled to reconsider its decision from earlier this month that jeopardized the race's future.

The WVRC is scheduled to meet Feb. 5 to consider a pair of items: rescinding its previous vote regarding the Charles Town Classic purse and approving the 2018 Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races stakes schedule. The meeting follows comments from Gov. Jim Justice that he would ask his staff to examine ways to reverse the WVRC's Jan. 23 decision.

In that decision, the WVRC voted to cut the Charles Town Classic purse to \$300,000 or allow up to \$600,000 from the purse fund to be committed to the race if Charles Town matched that amount. Track officials said the \$300,000 purse would not work for the race, which aims to bring in top older horses in April. They said revenues are not available for the matching funds idea and noted that such a funding plan is out of line with how other top stakes purses are funded.

Leading the charge to reduce the race's purse was commissioner Ken Lowe Jr., a former president of the Charles Town Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association. Lowe said a number of smaller stakes would do more for the local circuit and economy than a massive purse for a single race.

Charles Town officials argued, with no opposing view presented, that the Charles Town Classic has added \$6 million to \$7 million to the purse fund.

No matter which side of the aisle one falls on that important debate, it should be pointed out that a regulator dictating the specific purse of a race is not



COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

The start of the 2017 Charles Town Classic

good for the industry. Horsemen and the track already have an agreement in place on the stakes schedule.

For the regulator to take action on a specific race with an agreement already in place could set up a dynamic where not only tracks and horsemen have to come to an agreement but the tracks, horsemen, and regulators have to be on board. The better approach is for the interested parties to negotiate and reach an agreement. Should an agreement prove elusive, perhaps a regulator can help things along; but having a regulator basically make the decision for all parties is not a good standard.

The other interesting aspect of this story is that if the commission's decision is left to stand, Lowe would become the most powerful horseman in the state, as opposed to leadership of horsemen's groups at Charles Town and Mountaineer Casino and Racetrack. It could create a dynamic where horsemen would push for representation on racing commissions and tracks would push for the same representation. That would not be a positive change for regulatory boards. **BH**

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TAKING ACTION AND INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

By Ron Mitchell

[@BH_RMitchell](#)

Matt Koch is a partner in Shawhan Place near Paris, Ky. Among the farm's successes has been grade 1 winner Hilda's Passion, and graded stakes winners Strike the Bell and My Happy Face. Koch, who returned to Kentucky to partner with veteran Central Kentucky horseman Ted Kuster in Shawhan Place after serving in the U.S. Marine Corps, answers questions from BloodHorse sales editor Ron Mitchell about the state of the market, the upcoming Fasig-Tipton winter mixed sale, and his decision to run for state representative from the 72nd House District in the Republican primary in May.

BloodHorse MarketWatch: What is the significance of the Fasig-Tipton sale being the final major public auction before the breeding season begins?

Matthew Koch: We view this as the last chance to pick up open mares. With many of the breeding programs that are out there now, it seems like everyone



KEENELAND PHOTO

Matt Koch

needs a mare to fill a season they have to a stallion. This is also the close of our sales season, so it's the last chance to buy a pinhook yearling or to sell horses you don't want to feed for the next six months. There are many reasons to sell—sometimes it's simply because you have too many horses

BH: Do you think the same trends will continue at Fasig that have been present in other mixed sales last fall and earlier this month with emphasis on quality, especially, short yearlings and mares?

MK: Yes, quality is the key. The market seems to be getting polarized this way. If you check all the boxes look for your horse to exceed your expectations. If you have some holes, then you have a long road in front of you.



ANNE M. EBERHARDT

Spring Eclipse brings \$425,000 for Shawhan Place at the 2018 Keeneland January sale

(continued on page 20)

TAKING ACTION AND INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

(continued from page 19)

BH: Do breeders need to further adjust their expectations to fit the market?

MK: As a breeder, you have to constantly watch and be very realistic yourself about what's going to happen. At each sale, you have to watch (the market). For us, it's having multiple sets of eyes looking at these things and talking to each other to make these decisions. You have to constantly change your expectations. Sometimes a breeder will say "I have 'X' amount (of investment) in this horse so I will sell it for 'X' amount of dollars." But it just doesn't work that way. I tell people if you have a weanling and you can get 70% of its (yearling) value in November or January, I say go ahead and take it and let the risk go on. Sometimes that horse is going to go on and sell for double or triple what it brought when you sold it, but that's OK. That's when you congratulate the buyer and sell them another one. It's a numbers game.

MW: What is driving this demand for short yearlings?

MK: I can't speak for everyone, but for my clients they love the action you get with the quick flips—10 months, 12 months. They love that constant trading and quick turnaround. A lot of them have a mare or two, or have had in the past, and go through the process of breeding the mare and then maybe she doesn't get in foal, or if she does then she foals out and you're talking about a two-year investment and so much can go wrong. You can buy a mare, try to guess which stallion is going to be hot in a

year or two, breed her, and try to get a good foal out of her. Or, you can go to the sales, look at a couple of hundred of them, pick your sire, pick your bloodlines, pick your X-ray or scope report, pick the physical and you have the product right in front of you rather than trying to guess what it's going to be. It's buying a known versus buying an unknown. You may have to pay a premium for it, but you have what you want.

MW: What advice would you have for someone, particularly a young person, considering breaking into the business, either as breeder, to race, or to sell?

MK: You need to surround yourself with honest, hard-working people. Also be honest with yourself. Nothing increases the value of a horse like ownership, so you need to be careful, or you will end up with a huge herd and you are the only one that really values

them. Raising and breeding a horse is a marathon so make sure you have patience and wear long pants. Don't expect immediate success. I learn something new every day and I mess something up every day. Like the saying goes, 'it's not how many times you get knocked down its how many times you get back up.'

MW: Congratulations on your decision to enter the primary for the Kentucky House of Representatives. What led you to this decision?

MK: Borrowing a line from 1st Lt. Travis Manion, who was killed in action April 29, 2007: "If not me, then who?" As a Marine, these words run through my mind in all my actions. I served my country now it's my turn to serve my state. I have three children, my wife is a school teacher, and I have my own business ... I cannot afford to sit on the sidelines. **BH**

“

*I learn something new
every day and I mess
something up every day.”*

—MATT KOCH

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RACE RESULTS

WATCH RACE REPLAYS OF NORTH AMERICAN RACES BY CLICKING ON THE RACE NAME

STAKES RESULTS

AL FAHIDI FORT - SPONSORED BY DP WORLD-UAE REGION (G2)

Meydan, 2/1, 250,000, 3yo/up, 7f, 1:22.40, good.

1—**Jungle Cat** (IRE), 126, b h, 6 150,000
Iffraaj (GB)—Mike's Wildcat, by Forest Wildcat
O—Godolphin, B—Darley (IRE), T—APPLEBY CHARLIE, J—DOYLE JAMES

2—**JANOobi** (SAF), 126, c, 4 50,000
SILVANO (GER)—SHASTA DAISY (SAF), by RAKEEN

O—Sheikh Hamdan Bin Rashid al Maktoum, B—Maine Chance Farms (pty) Ltd (), T—DE KOCK MIKE, J—CROWLEY JIM

3—**Dream Castle** (GB), 126, b c, 4 25,000
Frankel (GB)—Sand Vixen (GB), by **Dubawi** (IRE)

O—Godolphin, B—Darley (GB), T—BIN SUROOR SAEED, J—COSGRAVE PAT

Margins: ¾, ½, 2¼. **Others:** D'BAI (IRE), NOAH FROM GOA (SAF), HORNSBY (GB), RICHARD PANKHURST (GB), CHAMPIONSHIP (IRE), AKEED CHAMPION (GB).

AL RASHIDIYA - SPONSORED BY JEBEL ALI PORT (G2)

Meydan, 2/1, 200,000, 3yo/up, 9f, 1:48.42, good.

1—**Benbati** (GB), 126, b c, 4 120,000
Dubawi (IRE)—Nahrain (GB), by Selkirk
O—Godolphin, B—Darley (GB), T—BIN SUROOR SAEED, J—MURPHY OISIN

2—**Bay of Poets** (IRE), 126, b g, 4 40,000
Lope de Vega (IRE)—Bristol Bay (IRE), by Montjeu (IRE)

O—Godolphin, B—AMMERLAND VERWALTUNG GMBH & CO KG (IRE), T—APPLEBY CHARLIE, J—DOYLE JAMES

Sale History: 2015 TATOC1, \$636,132, 2014 GOFNOF, \$238,526.

3—**Bravo Zolo** (IRE), 126, b g, 6 20,000
Rip Van Winkle (IRE)—Set Fire (IRE), by Bertolini

O—Godolphin, B—Tipper House Stud (IRE), T—APPLEBY CHARLIE, J—BUICK WILLIAM

Sale History: 2016 TATAUT, \$218,323, 2013 GOFSP, \$92,602.

Margins: 3¼, 2, head. **Others:** LIGHT THE LIGHTS (SAF), EARNSHAW (USA), SHARPALO (FR), AL SAHEM (SAF).

ALLOWANCE RESULTS

Aqueduct, Race 4, ALW

2/1, \$67,000, 4yo/up, 9f (dirt), 1:56.15, track good.

1—**Admiral Blue**, 121, ch h, 5, **Admiral Alex**—Dirty Harriette, by Unaccounted For, \$40,200, O—Leon J. Blusiewicz,

B—Daniel T. O'Ryan & Katherine S. O'Ryan (MD), T—Rudy R. Rodriguez, J—Junior Alvarado

Margin: 2¾, 5 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Aqueduct, Race 7, ALW

2/1, \$67,000, 4yo/up, f/m, 8f (dirt), 1:40.27, track good.

1—**Full House**, 121, b f, 4, **Discreetly Mine**—Collegiate, by Saarland, \$40,200, O—Joseph V. Shields, Jr., B—Gunpowder Farms LLC (KY), T—James A. Jerkens, J—Junior Alvarado

Sale History: 2015 KEESEP, \$125,000.

Margin: 7¼, 6 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Charles Town, Race 4, ALW

1/31, \$24,500, 4yo/up, 4.5f (dirt), :52.67, track fast.

1—**Aroostook**, 119, dk b/br g, 4, **Fiber Sonde**—Miss Isletworth, by **Proud and True**, \$14,640, O—Javier Contreras, B—Javier Contreras (WV), T—Javier Contreras, J—Jerry Villegas

Margin: neck, 7 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Charles Town, Race 7, ALW

1/31, \$24,500, 4yo/up, 4.5f (dirt), :52.63, track fast.

1—**Gabbi's Amor**, 118, dk b/br g, 9, **The Cliff's Edge**—Babe's Miracle, by **Successful Appeal**, \$14,580, O—Samuel J. Geris, Jr., B—Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Kuster & Dr. Jack Allen (KY), T—Victor M. Espinosa, J—Carlos L. Castro

Sale History: 2010 FTKOCT, (\$1,000 RNA).

Margin: 1¾, 8 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Delta Downs, Race 8, AOC

1/31, \$43,000, 4yo/up, 5f (dirt), :58.28, track fast.

1—**Stormation**, 120, b h, 5, **Stormy Atlantic**—Promoted Deputy, by Deputy Minister, \$25,800, O—Brent Delahousaye, B—Mercedes Stables LLC (KY), T—Brent Delahousaye, J—Steve J. Bourque

Margin: 6¼, 9 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Fair Grounds, Race 5, AOC

2/1, \$40,000, 3yo, f, a5.5f (turf), 1:04.33, course firm.

1—**Fame Feather**, 120, ch f, 3, **Lion Tamer**—Pretty Indian, by Indian Charlie, \$24,000, O—Picard Thoroughbreds Racing Stable LLC, B—Ramona M. Pierce (LA), T—Ron Fauchoux, J—Sophie Doyle

Sale History: 2016 ESLSEP, \$10,000.

Margin: 4¼, 10 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Fair Grounds, Race 6, AOC

2/1, \$47,000, 4yo/up, f/m, 6f (dirt), 1:10.41, track fast.

1—**Sister Kan**, 119, ch f, 4, **Kantharos**—Sister Charlie, by Indian Charlie, \$28,200, O—Naveed Chowhan, B—Kevin O'Gorman DVM (FL), T—Bernard S. Flint, J—Corey J. Lanerie

Sale History: 2016 FTMMAY, \$10,000, 2015 OBSAUG, \$27,000, 2014 OBSOCT, \$7,000.

Margin: 1¼, 6 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Fair Grounds, Race 7, AOC

2/1, \$40,000, 3yo, f, a8f (turf), 1:37.36, course firm.

1—**Kabella**, 120, b f, 3, **Kitten's Joy**—Zapper Belle, by **Ghostzapper**, \$24,000, O—Low, Lawana L. and Robert E.,

B—Robert Low & Lawana Low (KY), T—Steve Margolis, J—Shaun Bridgmohan

Margin: 1¼, 8 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Oaklawn Park, Race 8, ALW

2/1, \$76,000, 3yo, 8.5f (dirt), 1:44.30, track fast.

1—**Title Ready**, 115, dk b/br c, 3, **More Than Ready**—Title Seeker, by Monarchos, \$45,600, O—Charles E. Fipke, B—Charles Fipke (KY), T—Steven M. Asmussen, J—Luis Contreras

Margin: 3½, 10 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

MAIDEN RESULTS

Aqueduct, Race 2, MSW

2/1, \$60,000, 4yo/up, 8f (dirt), 1:40.48, track good.

1—**Ekhtibaar**, 121, b h, 5, **Bernardini**—Wasseema, by Danzig, \$36,000, O—Shadwell Stables, B—Shadwell Farm, LLC (KY), T—Chad C. Brown, J—Manuel Franco

Margin: 8¼, 6 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Aqueduct, Race 5, MSW

2/1, \$60,000, 3yo, 7f (dirt), 1:26.42, track good.

1—**Go Get the Munny**, 120, ch g, 3, **Munnings**—Bliss, by **Flashy Bull**, \$36,000, O—Robert Masiello, B—T. Gladwell, T. Burns & O. Rameriz (KY), T—Thomas Morley, J—Luis R. Reyes

Sale History: 2017 OBSMAR, \$95,000.

Margin: 7¼, 7 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Oaklawn Park, Race 7, MSW

2/1, \$75,000, 3yo, f, 8f (dirt), 1:39.18, track fast.

1—**Eskimo Kisses**, 120, ch f, 3, **To Honor and Serve**—Silver Colors, by Mr. Greeley, \$45,000, O—Magdalena Racing (Sherri McPeck), Gainesway Stable and Lerner, Harold, B—Gainesway Thoroughbreds Ltd. (KY), T—Kenneth G. McPeck, J—Alex L. Canchari

Margin: neck, 8 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Santa Anita Park, Race 2, MSW

2/1, \$54,000, 4yo/up, 8f (dirt), 1:40.12, track fast.

1—**Antioch**, 122, b c, 4, **Tiz Wonderful**—Tip Tap Poe, by **Tapit**, \$32,400, O—Hotter Than H Racing LLC, B—Charles P. Merrick (KY), T—Gerard Piccioni, J—Joseph Talamo

Sale History: 2016 OBSMAR, \$210,000, 2015 OBSAUG, \$35,000, 2014 KEENOV, \$25,000.

Margin: nose, 5 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

TOP HORSES

Listed below are the top 10 leading horses by 2018 North American earnings through January 31, 2018. Racing statistics are 2018 North American only.

Rank	Name	Starts	Wins	Places	Shows	Earnings	Win%	WPS%
1	Gun Runner	1	1	0	0	\$7,000,000	100%	100%
2	West Coast	1	0	1	0	\$1,600,000	0%	100%
3	Gunnevera	1	0	0	1	\$1,300,000	0%	100%
4	Fear the Cowboy	1	0	0	0	\$1,000,000	0%	0%
5	Seeking the Soul	1	0	0	0	\$850,000	0%	0%
6	Toast of New York	1	0	0	0	\$650,000	0%	0%
7	Stellar Wind	1	0	0	0	\$650,000	0%	0%
8	Collected	1	0	0	0	\$650,000	0%	0%
9	Sharp Azteca	1	0	0	0	\$650,000	0%	0%
10	War Story	1	0	0	0	\$650,000	0%	0%
11	Giant Expectations	1	0	0	0	\$650,000	0%	0%
12	Singing Bullet	1	0	0	0	\$650,000	0%	0%

TOP TRAINERS

Listed below are the top 10 leading trainers by 2018 North American earnings through January 31, 2018. Racing statistics are 2018 North American only.

Rank	Name	Starts	Wins	Places	Shows	Earnings	Win%	WPS%
1	Steven M. Asmussen	130	25	25	22	\$7,900,751	19%	55%
2	Bob Baffert	29	10	4	1	\$2,758,021	34%	52%
3	Jorge Navarro	43	13	6	6	\$1,612,300	30%	58%
4	Antonio Sano	60	2	6	6	\$1,423,515	3%	23%
5	Efren Loza, Jr.	12	6	2	1	\$1,050,302	50%	75%
6	Chad C. Brown	31	7	5	6	\$1,039,200	23%	58%
7	Dallas Stewart	13	3	3	2	\$956,330	23%	62%
8	Dale L. Romans	45	7	10	4	\$887,390	16%	47%
9	Brad H. Cox	62	20	9	6	\$887,382	32%	56%
10	Michael J. Maker	98	19	16	9	\$863,431	19%	45%

Data provided by [EQUIBASE](#)

TOP JOCKEYS

Listed below are the top 10 leading jockeys by 2018 North American earnings through January 31, 2018. Racing statistics are 2018 North American only.

Rank	Name	Starts	Wins	Places	Shows	Earnings	Win%	WPS%
1	Florent Geroux	61	12	12	10	\$7,707,843	20%	56%
2	Javier Castellano	75	15	16	7	\$2,467,790	20%	51%
3	Luis Saez	171	38	28	21	\$2,296,380	22%	51%
4	Jose L. Ortiz	128	26	17	19	\$1,893,100	20%	48%
5	Tyler Gaffalione	114	23	12	16	\$1,717,527	20%	45%
6	Irad Ortiz, Jr.	117	23	21	14	\$1,505,439	20%	50%
7	John R. Velazquez	50	10	7	4	\$1,253,645	20%	42%
8	Mike E. Smith	24	3	6	2	\$959,940	13%	46%
9	Gary L. Stevens	34	5	6	5	\$933,252	15%	47%
10	Joel Rosario	45	3	8	5	\$894,513	7%	36%