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Loss in Key Prep Sours Instant
Coffee's Derby Hopes

See page 4

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- 17 Wild On Ice Among a Dozen Late Nominees to Triple Crown

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ON THE COVER

Instant Coffee (far outside, gold and black silks) is unable to catch up as the Louisiana Derby field heads for home at Fair Grounds Race Course

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- » Grade 2 Winner Cross Border Kicks Off NSA Career

LOSS IN KEY PREP SOURS INSTANT COFFEE'S DERBY HOPES

By Bob Ehalt

[@BobEhalt](#)

Through more than 15 years as an owner, Al Gold owns a doctorate in the turbulent swings of emotions in Thoroughbred racing.

"This game certainly has a lot of ups and downs," Gold said.

On March 25, he and trainer Brad Cox were in the enviable position of sending out Instant Coffee under Gold's Gold Square banner as not only the 3-2 favorite in the \$1 million Louisiana Derby (G2) at Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots but one of the top five contenders for the Kentucky Derby (G1).

Seventy-two hours later, after a sixth-place finish in the Louisiana Derby, Instant Coffee has dropped out of the NTRA Top 10 3-Year-Old Poll and, barring a wave of defections, is unlikely to amass enough qualifying points to run in the May 6 opening leg of the Triple



HODGES PHOTOGRAPHY / LOUI HODGES JR.

Kingsbarns wins the Louisiana Derby at Fair Grounds Race Course

Crown.

"I don't think we'll make the Kentucky Derby with all the foreign horses coming in," Gold said. "We'll probably get pushed out. It's very disappointing, but there are other options for the horse. I've never run in the Preakness, so there's that. We'll see where we wind up."

A son of Bolt d'Oro bred by Sagamore Farm, Instant Coffee came into the 1 3/16-mile Louisiana Derby off wins in the Lecomte Stakes (G3) and Kentucky Jockey Club Stakes (G2). He was

nice positioned to secure a spot in the field of 20 for the Run for the Roses with 32 qualifying points and 100-40-30-20-10 points on the line for the top five finishers in the Fair Grounds' final Triple Crown prep.

But when Instant Coffee failed to fire in the stretch and missed fifth by 1 1/4 lengths, it left him in a precarious position in 19th place, with five preps worth a combined 200 points and the 40-point Lexington Stakes (G3) to go.

(continued on page 6)



COADY PHOTOGRAPHY



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(L-R): Instant Coffee wins the Kentucky Jockey Club Stakes at Churchill Downs; Instant Coffee wins the Lecomte Stakes at Fair Grounds Race Course



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LOSS IN KEY PREP SOURS INSTANT COFFEE'S DERBY HOPES

(continued from page 4)

Skewering the point chase for U.S. horses is the decision by the connections of Continuar to accept an invite through the Japan Road to the Kentucky Derby series and the likelihood that the 1-2 finishers in the UAE Derby (G2), Derma Sotogake and Dura Erede, will be at Churchill Downs for the American classic.

The April 15 Lexington at Keeneland could be a last-minute option for picking up the necessary points, but Gold and Cox both played down that route.

"Nothing's ruled out. Everything's on the table. We'll nominate him to the Lexington, but I don't think we'll go. We'll see what happens," said Cox, who picked up a likely Kentucky Derby starter in Jace's Road, who was third in the Louisiana Derby and is 10th in the scramble for 19 remaining spots with 45 points.

Gold said the Peter Pan Stakes (G3, May 13 at Belmont Park) and the May 20 Preakness are the likely targets for the son of the Uncle Mo mare Follow No One if a Kentucky Derby spot does not materialize.

While the Louisiana Derby marked a drop-off from Instant Coffee after his back-to-back graded stakes wins, the slow pace did not help his late-running style. While the victorious, pacesetting Kingsbarns cruised through an opening half-mile in :49.60, Instant Coffee



CHAD B. HARMON

“ I'm not going to get Kentucky Derby fever and make bad decisions... If we don't go this year, there are still a lot of good, quality races out there for our horses.”

— AL GOLD



MATHEA KELLEY

Derma Sotogake wins the UAE Derby at Meydan Racecourse

and jockey Luis Saez were 10th in the field of 12, about seven lengths behind.

"It's hard for a horse with his running style to do good in a race like that without pace. It is what is. He bounced out of it all right," Cox said in a March 28 phone call. "We'll send him to Churchill tonight and we'll train over the next two weeks and see what happens in the other preps."

Purchased for \$200,000 by Gold's racing manager, Joe Haroon, from the Upson Downs Farm consignment to the Keeneland September Yearling Sale, Instant Coffee has won three of five starts with earnings of \$452,815.

While Derby fever may not be percolating for Instant Coffee at the moment, Gold and Cox have another Triple Crown candidate in Gold Square's Slip Mahoney, who will run in the April 8 Wood Memorial (G2) at Aqueduct Racetrack. Second in the Gotham Stakes (G3) at the Big A, the son of Arrogate has 20 points and would crack the top 20 with a top two finish—and possibly a third—in the 100-40-30-20-10 point Wood Memorial.

"We have Slip Mahoney in the Wood and we're looking forward to that, though we want to do what's best for the horse," Gold said. "Even if he qualifies, we won't put him in unless we feel he has a shot."

"I'm not going to get Kentucky Derby fever and make bad decisions. I was in the Derby last year, and even though Cyberknife was 18th, it was a great experience. But I know if we don't go this year, there are still a lot of good, quality races out there for our horses." **BH**

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LEADING SIREs BY EARNINGS



Rank	Stallion, YO B (Sire) Farm, Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	BT SW/ SHs	GSW	G1W	AEI	Chief Earner (Earnings)	'23 Earnings
1	Into Mischief, '05, (Harlan's Holiday) Spendthrift Farm, KY, \$250,000	256 / 80	12 / 21	6	1	2.03	Atone \$561,000	\$5,986,585
2	Tonalist, '11, (Tapit) Lane's End, KY, \$10,000	103 / 25	1 / 2	0	0	2.01	Country Grammer \$3,620,000	\$4,611,123
3	Quality Road, '06, (Elusive Quality) Lane's End, KY, \$200,000	128 / 40	5 / 13	1	0	2.14	Emblem Road \$1,812,667	\$4,494,918
4	Uncle Mo, '08, (Indian Charlie) Ashford Stud, KY, \$150,000	161 / 46	7 / 8	3	1	1.58	Kingsbarns \$657,300	\$4,054,356
5	American Pharoah, '12, (Pioneer of the Nile) Ashford Stud, KY, \$60,000	140 / 40	1 / 5	0	0	1.37	Cafe Pharoah \$2,000,000	\$3,940,146
6	Gun Runner, '13, (Candy Ride) Three Chimneys Farm, KY, Private	106 / 22	2 / 11	0	0	3.13	Gunite \$594,575	\$3,700,017
7	Bernardini, '03, (A.P. Indy) N/A, Died	88 / 28	3 / 4	2	1	1.31	Art Collector \$1,780,000	\$3,217,843
8	Curlin, '04, (Smart Strike) Hill 'n' Dale Farms, KY, \$225,000	138 / 39	3 / 11	2	0	2.28	Elite Power \$900,000	\$3,039,779
9	Not This Time, '14, (Giant's Causeway) Taylor Made Stallions, KY, \$135,000	98 / 29	1 / 3	1	1	1.97	Sibelius \$1,205,000	\$2,738,160
10	Practical Joke, '14, (Into Mischief) Ashford Stud, KY, \$25,000	128 / 39	4 / 7	3	0	1.56	Practical Move \$240,000	\$2,608,041
11	Munnings, '06, (Speightstown) Ashford Stud, KY, \$100,000	177 / 57	6 / 10	0	0	1.54	Nimitz Class \$120,000	\$2,518,067
12	Dialed In, '08, (Mineshaft) Darby Dan Farm, KY, \$15,000	143 / 39	0 / 6	0	0	1.39	Defunded \$620,000	\$2,482,715
13	Violence, '10, (Medaglia d'Oro) Hill 'n' Dale Farms, KY, \$50,000	153 / 45	4 / 8	3	0	1.27	Forte \$238,080	\$2,291,380
14	Candy Ride (ARG), '99, (Ride the Rails) Lane's End, KY, \$75,000	120 / 31	4 / 9	2	0	1.92	Confidence Game \$601,750	\$2,290,023
15	Speightstown, '98, (Gone West) WinStar Farm, KY, \$80,000	119 / 31	3 / 9	1	0	1.99	Switzerland \$490,000	\$2,271,180

Listed above are the top 15 leading sires by 2023 Northern Hemisphere earnings through March 27, 2023. Only stallions that stand, will stand, or stood in North America (excluding stallions that died or were exported prior to the 2019 breeding season), and have runners in North America are included. Racing statistics are 2023 Northern Hemisphere only.



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LETTER TO THE EDITOR: NATIONAL HBPA'S HYPOCRISY

All I hear these days from the National Horsemen's Benevolent and Protective Association (HBPA) is how bad the federal Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act (HISA) is for Thoroughbred horse racing. The National HBPA says there is no need for uniform track safety and no need for nationwide medication rules.

Is the National HBPA living on Mars?

The National HBPA sanctimoniously proclaims it doesn't want Washington meddling in our business. It claims that HISA is unconstitutional and that the government cannot give a private organization control over the affairs of other private entities. And the National HBPA is spending no-telling how much money in court seeking to prove its point and destroy nationwide anti-doping and safety standards.

So, what is going on here? Why is this group, which falsely presents itself as somehow representing all horsemen, outrageously asserting that track safety and doping don't need a national solution?

This raises troubling questions. What really is the National HBPA? Who runs it? Why in the world would it go to such extremes to sabotage better controls on safety and drugs?

Have the leaders of the National HBPA suddenly (and conveniently) developed memory loss? Don't they remember the media firestorm over horse fatalities at Santa Anita Park that threatened to shut down California racing?

Have they forgotten the federal indictments and convictions of Jason Servis, Jorge Navarro, and 25 others for years of illicit drug doping right under the noses of state regulators?

All this made me wonder where the National HBPA gets its money and power. So, I did a little research. Here is what I learned.

The National HBPA is an umbrella organization that is funded by state HBPA's. Now here's the interesting part: State HBPA's get their money, and their clout, as a result of federal legislation passed 45 years ago—the Interstate Horseracing Act of 1978. This law allowed horse racing to engage in nationwide betting via telephonic and electronic means, something that was not allowed for any other sport.

However, interstate wagering can't happen unless a racetrack gets the approval of the horsemen's group

representing the majority of horsemen there. It is known as the "horsemen's veto" and must be incorporated into a catch-all agreement "regarding the conduct of horse racing" at the track. If you think that takes in a lot of territory, you're right. It gives the state HBPA's enormous leverage.

We all know that approximately 90% of Thoroughbred racing's handle comes from off-track wagering. Holding the key that unlocks this giant revenue stream is a big deal. The key holders, HBPA's, wield their veto right to control all aspects of racing.

The local HBPA's heavily influence how much of all track revenue streams (on-track, off-track sponsorships—not just what the veto applies to) go into purses; how all this money is handled; details regarding stalls and other track facilities; vendor relationships; backside expenditures, even details concerning non-racing events at the track.

Moreover, these agreements require the track to pay money directly to the HBPA's for unspecified "services to horsemen." And, as we know, these amounts are not small.

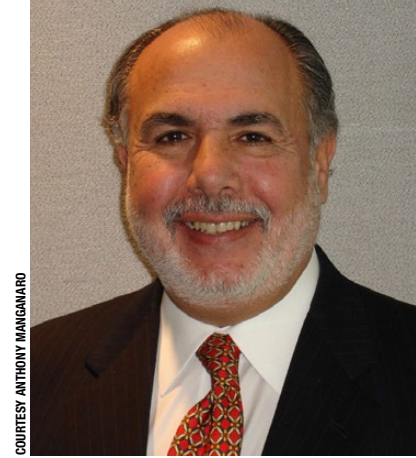
Some of the concessions horsemen's groups get from tracks under the threat of exercising the veto are beneficial. But what gets under my skin is the two-faced nature of the National HBPA and some state HBPA's—all private organizations given power by federal law to control a wide range of important issues in horse racing, including the allocation of racing's entire revenue stream—and then gets paid handsomely for doing it!

Even worse, the National HBPA and the state HBPA's answer to no one.

All the while, this unregulated, private group, authorized by federal law, beats its chest and protests that the federal government has no business empowering another private group—HISA, which does answer to a higher authority, the Federal Trade Commission—to oversee just two aspects of racing: clean competition and safety.

Apparently, the "H" in HBPA really stands for "hypocrite."

Anthony Manganaro, CEO of Siena Farm, Paris, Ky. **BH**



COURTESY ANTHONY MANGANARO

Anthony Manganaro

THE WATER HAY OATS ALLIANCE ANNOUNCES DISSOLUTION

Edited Press Release

In a March 27 release, Staci Hancock, managing member of The Water Hay Oats Alliance, announced the dissolution of the group that was instrumental in passing the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act.

The full release follows.

For a handful of owners and breeders, it all started with a simple idea—to appoint an independent, gold-standard, anti-doping agency to oversee our sport. Today marks the first day of a new age in U.S. horse racing under the jurisdiction of HISA and its Anti-Doping and Medication Control Committee.

For WHOA, it's "mission accomplished," almost. While we can celebrate that against all odds a federal bill was passed bringing national uniformity to drug and medication rules, missing from the equation is the international excellence and independence USADA would have brought to racing.

We have all fought the good fight, but it has been made clear to us through the action and inaction of HISA, that WHOA does not have a seat at the table moving forward. Therefore, WHOA is disbanding.

(continued on page 12)



Staci and Arthur Hancock

LEADING SIRE,

Kingsbarns (**UNCLE MO**) won Saturday's **Louisiana Derby [G2]** for Todd Pletcher to remain unbeaten and become his sire's seventh Stakes winner of 2023



BROODMARE SIRE,

Southlawn (dam by **UNCLE MO**) won Saturday's **Fair Grounds Oaks [G2]** for Norm Casse

AND SIRE OF SIRE'S

Key Of Life (**MO TOWN**) registered her second Stakes success in Saturday's **Purple Martin S.** at Oaklawn for Brad Cox. She is one of six Stakes performers from her sire's first crop



UNCLE MO

2YOs by **UNCLE MO** at OBS March last week
sold for up to **\$950,000**

while those by **MO TOWN** sold for up to **\$300,000**

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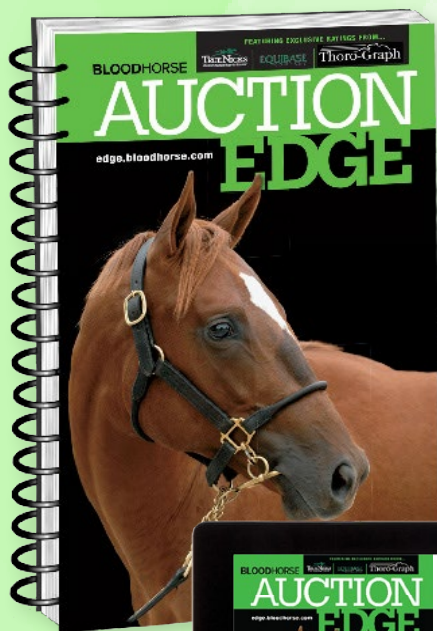
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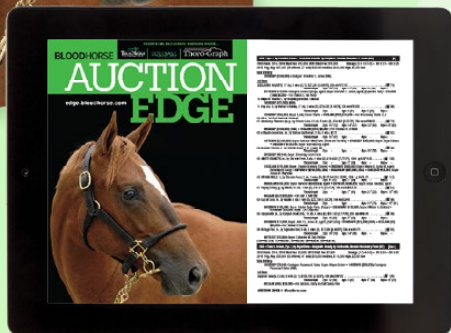
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THE WATER HAY OATS ALLIANCE ANNOUNCES DISSOLUTION

(continued from page 10)

"It's not exactly what we wanted, but it's what we've got. Hopefully, it's a huge step in the right direction, assuming HISA does not become an unwieldy behemoth," said WHOA co-founder Arthur Hancock.

"While HISA is not perfect, it is certainly a positive addition for racing," added WHOA co-founder George Strawbridge.

"Without the formation of WHOA, we would not be where we are today on the doorstep of a new era for horse racing with the beginning of HISA. No doubt WHOA was the fire that brought necessary change to our industry with national rules and regulations," said Graham Motion, a WHOA supporter and member of the HISA Horsemen's Advisory Group.

Barry Irwin, longtime WHOA supporter and member of the HISA Anti-Doping Medication Control Committee commented, "The fight to get the legislation passed that eventually led to HISA provided me with the greatest challenge of my involvement in racing. It proved to be both the most formidable and satisfying challenge of my life. While WHOA's mission in one sense was not fulfilled, I think we can all stand tall and feel good about doing something that most in the industry doubted could be done."

Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good. I urge individual WHOA members to remain a part of the conversation and to continue to call for program improvements and complete transparency from HISA. They hold the future of our sport and the welfare of our horses and jockeys in their hands.

Heartfelt thanks for your support and your resilience...

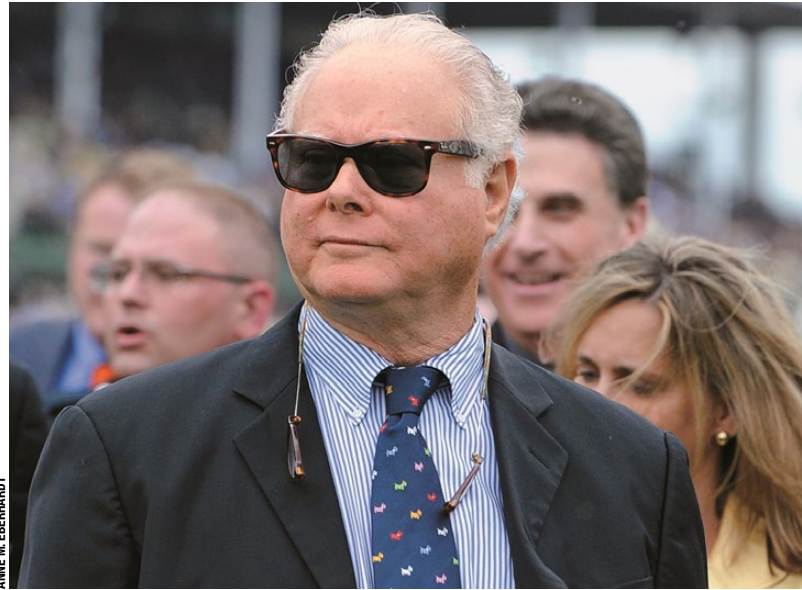
Sincerely,

Staci Hancock

Managing Member of The Water Hay Oats Alliance

The release went on to thank members.

WHOA members worked hand in glove with Congressmen Andy Barr (R-KY) and Paul Tonko (D-NY) in the House of Representatives. Tirelessly, we worked together to spearhead the push for federal legislation to solve these "whoas" and ultimately helped pass a bill that included the core of our mission.



ANNE M. EBERHARDT

Barry Irwin

At the end of the day, WHOA's membership grew from a handful to over 2,000 industry participants—a mighty force.

Thanks go to each and every member who took a stand and joined our efforts; members who networked with other like-minded associates, who contributed to our Water Hay Oats Political Action Committee, who lobbied their state representatives, who signed amicus briefs to defeat opponents of our efforts in the courts. Thanks go to our over 100 Supporters who shared their celebrity, releasing personal opinions on the issue in public statements. Thanks go to our pro-bono team: Monica Driver and Marcelo Arruda at Eqqus Media for developing and managing the WHOA website, Ruthie Bowen at the Bell Group for advertising and marketing, and Paul Sullivan at Frost-Brown-Todd for legal advice and direction. Thanks go to Sue Finley at the Thoroughbred Daily News and Ray Paulick at the Paulick Report for keeping WHOA's efforts alive in the press.

We congratulate the WHOA Supporters who have gone on to serve under the HISA umbrella: Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear as vice chairman of the Horseracing Integrity and Safety Authority Board of Directors, Irwin as a member of the HISA Anti-Doping Medication Control Committee and Mark Casse and Motion as members of the HISA Horsemen's Advisory Group.

This press release has been edited for content and style by BloodHorse Staff. BH

 Share this story

1 | FORTE 🐾

Owner/Trainer: Repole Stable and St. Elias Stable/Todd Pletcher

Pedigree: Violence—Queen Caroline, by Blame
Breeder: South Gate Farm (KY)

Drawn in post 11 in the Florida Derby (G1), last year's champion 2-year-old male could experience a wide trip in the 1 1/8-mile race. But even if he loses a few lengths by running outside, he still ought to be mighty tough to beat. After taking the Breeders' Cup Juvenile (G1) last fall, he won the Fountain of Youth Stakes (G2) with authority, pushing his record to 5-for-6. "As impressively as he's won a couple of these races, he's kind of come to the wire with his ears up taking everything in," said Hall of Fame trainer Todd Pletcher, a six-time Florida Derby winner.

2 | TAPIT TRICE 🐾

Whisper Hill Farm and Gainesway Stable/
Todd Pletcher

Tapit—Danzatrice, by Dunkirk
Gainesway Thoroughbreds (KY)

Pletcher now is 1-2 in these standings following the Derby Dozen exit of Instant Coffee, who ran a listless sixth, beaten 9 3/4 lengths, when attempting to rally behind a slow pace in the March 25 Louisiana Derby (G2). As for Tapit Trice, the talented gray looked good in his first workout since capturing the March 11 Tampa Bay Derby (G3), breezing a half-mile in :49.82 at Palm Beach Downs March 25 in tandem with stablemate Dreamlike. As well as he ran in the Tampa Bay Derby, closing with a rush after breaking slowly and climbing behind kickback, hopeful to see a more complete performance in the April 8 Blue Grass Stakes (G1) at Keeneland.

3 | PRACTICAL MOVE 🐾

Leslie Amestoy, Pierre Jean Amestoy Jr., and Roger Beasley/Tim Yakteen

Practical Joke—Ack Naughty, by Afleet Alex
Chad Brown and Head of Plains Partners (KY)

The San Felipe Stakes (G2) winner turned in an excellent workout March 26 at Santa Anita Park, roughly two weeks before a start in the April 8 Santa Anita Derby (G1). Breezing by himself, he zipped five furlongs in a bullet :59 1/5 without any urging. At 1 1/8 miles, the Santa Anita Derby should provide a good gauge of this colt's staying ability. He pulled away late in his last two graded starts at 1 1/16 miles, running a bit farther than some other

leading stakes-winning progeny of one-turn specialist Practical Joke (i.e. Chocolate Gelato, Tejano Twist, and Little Vic).

4 | GEAX ROCKET RIDE

Pin Oak Stud/Richard Mandella

Candy Ride (ARG)—Beyond Grace, by Uncle Mo
OXO Equine (KY)

The San Felipe runner-up easily dispatched a workmate in his Sunday breeze at Santa Anita, in which he completed six furlongs in 1:13 while given a stiff gallop out. After a pace-pressing trip in the San Felipe, chasing Hejazi, who weakened to fourth, Geaux Rocket Ride might elevate his game further if able to assert command early in the Santa Anita Derby. The San Felipe was just his second outing after a frontrunning six-furlong maiden win in 1:09 and change.

5 | NATIONAL TREASURE

SF Racing, Starlight Racing, Madaket Stables, Robert Masterson, Stonestreet Stables, Jay Schoenfarber, Waves Edge Capital, and Catherine Donovan/Tim Yakteen

Quality Road—Treasure, by Medaglia d'Oro
Peter E. Blum Thoroughbreds (KY)

Since being withdrawn from the San Felipe with a tender foot, this colt has fired one fast drill after another, with his latest, a six-furlong move in 1:12 1/5 on Sunday being among his most visually impressive. He outworked Reincarnate for five furlongs, then breezed an additional eighth on his own. His connections want him on tilt for his final Derby prep in the Blue Grass. Out of action since finishing third in the Jan. 8 Sham Stakes (G3) at Santa Anita Park, and without any Derby points, he may need a 1-2 finish to garner sufficient points to make the Derby.

6 | REINCARNATE 🐾

SF Racing, Starlight Racing, Madaket Stables, Robert Masterson, Stonestreet Stables, Jay Schoenfarber, Waves Edge Capital, and Catherine Donovan/Tim Yakteen

Good Magic—Allanah, by Scat Daddy
Woods Edge Farm (KY)

On the strength of his troubled third-place finish at Oaklawn Park in the Feb. 25 Rebel Stakes (G2), in which he was shut off in midstretch after being slow to get going early over a sloppy track, he was installed as the 5-2 favorite for Saturday's Arkansas Derby (G1).



COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

Jockey Jareth Loveberry celebrates a victory from Two Phil's in the Jeff Ruby Steaks at Turfway Park

Before the Rebel, he won a maiden race and the Sham, taking the latter with grit. Stablemate National Treasure got the better of him in a joint drill Sunday at Santa Anita, though it was apparent the connections were looking for a stiffer breeze from National Treasure, who worked an extra furlong after missing the San Felipe with a foot bruise in early March.

7 | TWO PHIL'S 🐾

Patricia's Hope and Phillip Sagan/Larry Rivelli
Hard Spun—Mia Torri, by General Quarters
Phillip Sagan (KY)

Not inclined to overlook the Jeff Ruby Steaks (G3) winner this year in the Kentucky Derby (G1). Unlike in many years, when turf horses won the Jeff Ruby on Turfway Park's synthetic surface, this colt took it March 25 after going from dirt to synthetic. Two Phil's is a hard-trying, talented 3-year-old—irrespective of surface—similar in versatility to Animal Kingdom (the lone synthetic Jeff Ruby winner to capture the Derby, in 2011). Two Phil's even won over a sloppy track at Churchill Downs last year in taking the Street Sense Stakes (G3). His Jeff Ruby was quick (1 1/8 miles in 1:49.03) and he decisively defeated one of the top 3-year-old grass horses in the country, Major Dude.



Keeneland Sales Graduate

(continued on page 14)

BYRON KING'S DERBY DOZEN

(continued from page 13)

8 | KINGSBARNs

Spendthrift Farm/Todd Pletcher
Uncle Mo—Lady Tapit, by Tapit
Parks Investment Group (KY)

This progressive colt improved to 3-for-3 in capturing the Louisiana Derby (G2), spurring away at the head of the lane and scoring by 3 1/2 lengths. As exciting as his performance was, he enjoyed a favorable trip up front with leisurely splits of :49.60 and 1:14.69 en route to winning the 1 3/16-mile race in 1:57.33, the slowest Louisiana Derby in four runnings at the current distance but a performance that still earned him a 100 Equibase Speed Figure. Runner-up Disarm also ran into traffic problems or he would have been closer to this colt at the finish. This 3-year-old's ability to win on and off the lead should continue to serve him well.

9 | VERIFYING

Jonathan Poulin, Westerberg, Susan Magnier,
Derrick Smith, and Michael Tabor/Brad Cox

Justify—Diva Delite, by Repent

Hunter Valley & Mountmellick Farm (KY)

Trainer Brad Cox tends to give his stiffest drills to his horses two weeks or so before a scheduled start, and so it was for this colt on Saturday. He went six furlongs in 1:12 4/5 at Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots in preparation for the Blue Grass,

while barnmate Hit Show went the same distance in 1:12 3/5 for the April 8 Wood Memorial Stakes (G2). In winning an allowance optional claiming race at Oaklawn earlier in the year, Verifying pressed the pace and pulled away, a far better trip than when he was fourth after being bottled up in traffic in the Rebel. He also showed promise at 2 by placing behind Blazing Sevens in the Champagne Stakes (G1).

10 | CONFIDENCE GAME

Don't Tell My Wife Stables/Keith Desormeaux
Candy Ride (ARG)—Eblouissante, by Bernardini
Summer Wind Equine (KY)

Trainer Keith Desormeaux plans to run the Rebel winner next in Kentucky, either in the Blue Grass or the April 18 Lexington Stakes (G3) at Keeneland, or go straight into the May 6 Kentucky Derby. Would not be surprised to see Desormeaux bring this 3-year-old in fresh in the Derby, knowing his colt is already in the race with 57 qualifying points. Desormeaux wants to have a horse with plenty in the tank for the Triple Crown. Two works since the Rebel, coming March 18 and this past Saturday at Fair Grounds, have been relatively easy. Look for him to pick up the pace in his April breezes.

11 | ROCKET CAN

Frank Fletcher Racing Operations/Bill Mott
Into Mischief—Tension, by Tapit
Woodford Thoroughbreds (KY)



**WATCH: Kingsbarns, Two Phil's
Score Decisive Derby Prep Wins**

After racing twice in Derby preps this winter in South Florida, where he won the Holy Bull Stakes (G3) and ran second to Forte in the Fountain of Youth, he travels to Oaklawn Park to run in Saturday's Arkansas Derby. He should provide a barometer of how one of Florida's best stacks up against horses that have been running at Oaklawn and the Fair Grounds this winter. First or second in four consecutive routes, he is a determined colt, though perhaps not with the upside of the divisional leaders.

12 | ANGEL OF EMPIRE

Albaugh Family Stables/Brad Cox

Classic Empire—Armony's Angel, by To Honor
and Serve

Forgotten Land Investment and Black Diamond
Equine (PA)

While many 3-year-olds are still needing to prove they can go 1 1/8 miles, he has already won the Feb. 18 Risen Star Stakes (G2) at the distance. So class and distance handicappers will likely think more of him than those who emphasize final times and speed figures. The Risen Star developed with a fast early-slow late race shape that played to his closing strength, and his time of 1:51.47 was slow. But 2 3/4 lengths behind him in third was Two Phil's, next-out winner of the Jeff Ruby.



COGLIANESE PHOTOS



HODGES PHOTOGRAPHY/JAMIE NEWELL

(L-R): Rocket Can wins the Holy Bull Stakes at Gulfstream Park; Kingsbarns pulls away to win the Louisiana Derby at Fair Grounds Race Course



DOLLARS & SENSE

WITH FRANK ANGST

DOLLARS AND SENSE: BETTORS SCORE AT TURFWAY PARK

By Frank Angst

[@BH_FAngst](#)

With large fields becoming the norm at Turfway Park this winter and spring, bettors who have been able to come up with an angle or two have been handsomely rewarded.

The lucrative purses catching the attention of horsemen and a synthetic surface that has allowed racing to move forward under the changing weather conditions of Northern Kentucky has helped Turfway Park average field sizes of nearly 10 horses—9.94 per race—for the 523 races contested there since Nov. 30. With three dates remaining in the winter-spring meet, Turfway has paid out \$25.19 million in purses.

Consider that just five years ago at these two full meets that run back to back (holiday meet, winter-spring meet), total purses paid reached just \$5.18 million and it's easy to understand why average starters per race for the two meets has jumped to 9.94, up nearly 1.5 horses from 2017-2018.

The winter-spring meet wraps up its final three dates this week, Thursday, March 29-Saturday, April 1.

Turfway offered its biggest race date of the year Saturday, and an all-stakes Pick 5 sequence ending with an impressive win by Two Phil's in the Jeff Ruby Steaks (G3) saw that sequence of three favorites, a second choice, and one longshot return \$1,839.91 for

a winning 50-cent wager. Granted, the challenge is handicapping five races that averaged just more than 10 starters a race, but bettors are rewarded.

Also helping matters is the track offers a 15% takeout on its early Pick 5 and its late Pick 5. The latter was added in late December. Turfway reported that through the first 41 days of racing at the current winter/spring meet (through March 22), the average Pick 5 payout has been a stout \$10,437.85.

This writer would still like to see what this meet could do with lower takeout on its more basic win, place, and show wagers, but at least the penny breakage put in place at the state level at all Kentucky tracks appears to have effectively helped put a dent in the takeout. The average \$2 win mutuel is \$15.95 (through March 22), which is \$1.14 higher than the 2022 average of \$14.81 when dime breakage was in place.

'Affordability checks' annoying UK bettors

If you haven't yet read Julian Muscat's Letter From Europe column in the March issue of BloodHorse (what are you waiting for?), it outlines industry concerns about tighter regulatory checks on British bettors using online bookmaker platforms.

Muscat writes: "To date, the checks have alienated bettors by their intrusiveness and the stringent conditions bettors must fulfill in order to continue placing bets. Regular bettors already will have encountered these 'affordability checks.' "

Muscat notes that affordability checks are a concept introduced by the Gambling Commission, a government-appointed quango with a remit to tackle gambling addiction and prevent money laundering. The affordability checks can go so far as to require bank statements from players, to determine their ability to wager responsibly.

Racing Post reported a week ago that the British Horseracing Authority has called for such checks to not impact the vast majority of players who wager responsibly.

"We do not support blanket measures on affordability, and believe that if measures are to be introduced, they should be targeted at the individual and reflect their specific circumstances." **BH**



COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

At 5-2 Two Phil's wins the Jeff Ruby Steaks, closing out a Pick 5 that returned more than \$1,800 despite favorites winning three of the races

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COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

Crafty Money wins the New Mexico Breeders' Oaks at Sunland Park

CRAFTY MONEY IS CONQUEST MO MONEY'S FIRST STAKES WINNER

By *Eric Mitchell*

[@BH_EMitchell](#)

Tom and Sandy McKenna's homebred Crafty Money became the first black-type winner for their stallion Conquest Mo Money March 26 when the 3-year-old filly won the New Mexico Breeders' Oaks at Sunland Park.

Campaigned by the McKennas' Judge Lanier Racing, Crafty Money has won or placed three times from four career starts. The New Mexico Breeders' Oaks, which she won by 2 1/2 lengths, was also her first win.

The McKennas bred the filly in New Mexico out of the Mr. Groush daughter Songcraft, whom they acquired for \$5,000 at the 2006 Barretts Summer 2-Year-Olds in Training and Horses of Racing Age Sale. Crafty Money is the mare's fourth winner from five to race.

Conquest Mo Money stands at McKenna Thoroughbreds near Taiban, N.M., for a private fee. The McKennas acquired the son of Uncle Mo for \$8,500 at the 2016 Keeneland November Breeding

Stock Sale through the Conquest Stables dispersal managed by Lane's End. He went on to win the Mine That Bird Derby and finish second in the Sunland Derby (G3) and Arkansas Derby (G1), all in 2017. He earned \$510,580.

A second-crop sire this year, Conquest Mo Money is one of 18 in his sire class to be represented by a stakes winner as of March 28. Songcraft has a 2-year-old full sister to Crafty Money named Musical Money, who has not started working yet. The mare did not have a foal in 2022. **BH**

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WILD ON ICE AMONG A DOZEN LATE NOMINEES TO TRIPLE CROWN

Edited Press Release

Frank Sumpter's Sunland Park Derby (G3) winner Wild On Ice was among a dozen 3-year-olds that were made eligible to compete in the 2023 Triple Crown with a late \$6,000 payment that was due March 2.

Wild On Ice, a 35-1 upsetter in the race, now earns 50 qualifying points for the Kentucky Derby (G1) for his recent victory. His connections have stated they could target the \$3 million Kentucky Derby May 6.

The other late nominees: Middleham Park Racing's Brave Emperor; Adam Ference and Bill Dory's Chase the Chaos; John Salzman Jr., Fred Wasserloos and Anthony Geruso's Coffeewithchris; Mrs. John Magnier, Michael Tabor, Derrick Smith, Westerberg and Jonathan Poulin's Eye Witness; The Del Mar Group's

Henry Q; Lucky Seven Stable's Interlock Empire; Brereton Jones and Naber Racing's King Russell; Big Chief Racing's Kolomio; C2 Racing Stable's Mr. Peeks; C2 Racing Stable and Stefania Farms' Nautical Star; and LC Racing's Ninetypercentmaddie.

In total, there are now 381 eligible 3-year-olds eligible to compete in the Triple Crown series which consists of the Kentucky Derby, \$1.5 million Preakness Stakes (G1) May 20, and \$1.5 million Belmont Stakes (G1) June 10.

Any horse not nominated during the early or late phases can become Triple Crown eligible through a supplemental nomination payment due at the time of entry for each Triple Crown race: Kentucky Derby (\$200,000), Preakness (\$150,000), and Belmont (\$50,000).

This press release has been edited for content and style by BloodHorse Staff. BH



COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

Wild On Ice after his upset in the Sunland Park Derby at Sunland Park

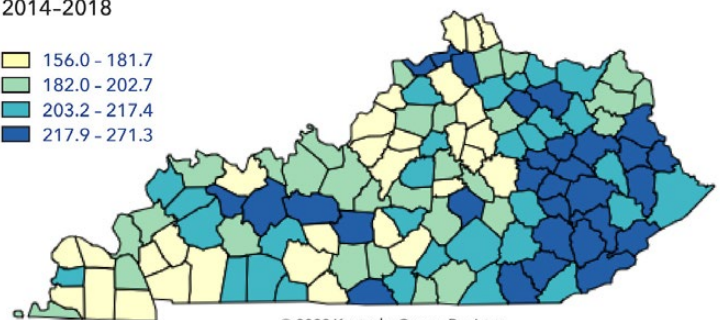
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FORTE FAVORED IN POOL 6 OF KENTUCKY DERBY FUTURE WAGER

Edited Press Release



COGLIANESE PHOTOS/RYAN THOMPSON

Forte wins the Fountain of Youth Stakes at Gulfstream Park

The final pool of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager is set to make its three-day run March 30-April 1, with Repole Stable and St. Elias Stable's Forte tabbed as the solid 5-2 favorite in the field of 39 individual horses plus a 40th option for "All Other 3-Year-Olds" not listed.

Unlike the first five Future Wager pools, Pool 6 of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager will close Saturday at 6 p.m. ET., which is 40 minutes before the \$1 million Florida Derby (G1) and an hour and 50 minutes prior to the \$1.25 million Arkansas Derby (G1)—making it a true future wager.

Pool 6 will feature \$2 win and exacta wagering. Fans can wager via www.TwinSpires.com along with simulcast and ADW outlets from around the country.

Forte, the 4-5 odds-on favorite in the Florida Derby, will have his final test Saturday before the \$3 million Kentucky Derby (G1) May 6. The son of Violence has taken heavy action in all five previous pools of the future wager, and added to his favoritism in his last start when he won the \$400,000 Fountain of Youth Stakes (G2) at Gulfstream Park.

Overall, there are 14 new interests in Pool 6 from Pool 5: Arctic Arrogance, Bourbon Bash, Continuar, Derma Sotogake, Dreamlike, Dubyuhnell, Fort Bragg,

Hayes Strike, I Don't Get It, Jace's Road, Mendelssohns March, Shadow Dragon, Slip Mahoney, and Wild On Ice.

Wild On Ice, the winner of the \$600,000 Sunland Park Derby (G3), was not originally nominated to the Triple Crown but his connections have paid a \$6,000 late Triple Crown nomination for him to become eligible for the series.

There are no refunds in the Kentucky Derby Future Wager. Should Churchill Downs officials determine during the duration of this week's three-day pool that one of the wagering interests has experienced an injury, illness, or other circumstance that would prevent the horse from participating in the Kentucky Derby, betting on the individual horse will be suspended immediately.

More information, Brisnet.com past performances, and real-time odds on the Kentucky Derby Future Wager will be available before the pool opens Thursday online at <https://www.kentuckyderby.com/wager/future-wager>.

This press release has been edited for content and style by BloodHorse Staff. BH

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An advertisement for the April issue of BloodHorse magazine. The background is a dark green gradient. At the top, the text "SEE WHAT'S INSIDE THE APRIL BLOODHORSE ISSUE" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font. Below this, there are two overlapping images of the magazine cover. The larger one on the left shows a jockey in a blue uniform with arms crossed, and the text "BLOODHORSE" at the top and "FAST TRACK" at the bottom. The smaller one on the right is a tablet version of the same cover. At the bottom right of the advertisement, there is a green button with the word "GO" and a right-pointing arrow.



SALES UPDATE

TEXAS 2-YEAR-OLDS IN TRAINING

TEXAS 2-YEAR-OLDS IN TRAINING SALE PROVING UPWARD TREND

Edited Press Release

For evidence that HB 2463 is fulfilling its mission to boost the horse racing industry in the Lone Star State, the Texas Legislature need only look to the Texas Thoroughbred Association's 2-Year-Olds in Training Sale at Lone Star Park April 5.

Starting in 2020, through HB 2463, a portion of the sales tax on horse feed, tack, and other equine products has been channeled into beefing up race purses and providing funds for other equine incentives and events. More money has meant more and better horses for the auction.

The 186 2-year-olds in the 2023 catalog are up from 144 last year and 122 in 2021, with the sale's COVID-19-forced cancellation in 2020. These 2-year-olds are the first to be born since HB 2463's passage. The sale's breeze show—during which most of the horses will have timed workouts for generally an eighth of a mile—will be April 3 at Lone Star Park. The sale and breeze show are open to the public.



COURTESY OF TEXAS THOROUGHBRED ASSOCIATION

Landon Jordan said he attended his first horse sale at the TTA 2-year-old sale two years ago. While he bought a couple of fillies last year at Ocala, the 2022 TTA 2-year-old sale was Jordan's coming-out party for launching his Mansfield Racing Stable. He bought four horses, including sales topper Free Drop Maddy for \$200,000 and the top-priced colt, Release McCracken, for \$125,000.

All four are winners, and three have won at least twice. Kentucky-bred Release McCracken made it three straight victories by taking the \$100,000 Texas Thoroughbred Association Derby at Sam Houston Race Park March 25. Louisiana-bred El Deal Me Aces (\$78,000 purchase) won a Fair Grounds allowance, while Cajun Crazy, a Louisiana-bred son of 2017 Preakness winner Cloud Computing, is a Fair Grounds maiden winner bought for \$65,000.

"We're excited about what we did over there," Jordan said, speaking of horses he bought at last August's Texas Summer Yearling Sale. "We have a lot that we're really happy with. Obviously, we'll be back at the 2-year-old sale. That was a heck of a sale for us... I think if you're starting out, it's a lot easier to go regional, buy at a sale like the TTA because you're going to be running in Texas, in Louisiana, Oklahoma, maybe Arkansas. If you do buy a Kentucky-bred, you have the safeguard of being able to run them in these TTA sales races. You're kind of protecting yourself."



COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

Release McCracken wins the Texas Thoroughbred Association Derby at Sam Houston Race Park

(continued on page 20)



SALES UPDATE

TEXAS 2-YEAR-OLDS IN TRAINING

TEXAS 2-YEAR-OLDS IN TRAINING SALE PROVING UPWARD TREND

(continued from page 19)

From buying his first horses a year ago, Jordan now has 14 horses, half being 2-year-olds.

"It's been a great sale for everyone, consignors and buyers alike," said Jordan's trainer, Bret Calhoun. "I think there's a horse for everybody, for every price range. The Texas-breds have been at a premium because the foal crop has been less and the purse structure has come up. It's supply and demand—not enough of them to go around, and you'll pay a premium for a good one.

"You have other benefits for horses in that sale. You have the Sale Futurity that's been very popular, the Texas Stallion Stakes. There's a tremendous amount of Louisiana-breds, and there's a big market for those as well there. A lot of people shopping that sale race in Texas and Louisiana, so some of the Louisiana people have brought their better horses over, and they've sold extremely well. Then you filter in some 'open' horses, too, some Kentucky-breds who have fared very well. You can get some value out of that sale."

Hall of Famer Steve Asmussen, North America's first trainer to top 10,000 victories, agreed.

"It's a sale that has made a nice little resurgence, a direct result, I believe, of the supplement to the Texas purses that the state has provided," he said. "Some very solid racehorses came out of it last year, and it's a book



COURTESY OF TEXAS THOROUGHBRED ASSOCIATION

The Free Drop Billy filly consigned as Hip 134 breezes during the 2022 under tack show

[WATCH: TTA Two-Year-Olds In Training 2023 Sale](#)

of better pedigrees this year."

While Asmussen will be at the sale to buy, his family will be there to sell.

Just under 20% of the horses in the catalog are being sold by Asmussen Horse Center for its clients, with a sales-leading 36 horses in the original catalog. That's about twice the number the Laredo operation had last year. It reflects progeny of Texas stalwarts such as Too Much Bling and also noteworthy Kentucky sires such as Uncle Mo, Frosted, Munnings, and the late Bernardini, as well as the promising young stud City of Light. But even more important to Keith Asmussen, patriarch of the first family of thoroughbred racing and Steve's father, is the youngsters' conformation.

"We're going to have some nice horses with fast works," he said. "We're not one to go to extremes, but we like to show their ability."

Asmussen said he's seeing more of his clients opting to foal their mares in Texas to get accredited Texas-breds. More also want to sell at the TTA auctions, and he sees future sales just getting better as those Texas foals reach racing age. Forty-four of the 316 registered Texas-bred foals of 2021 are in the 2023 sales catalog, not counting any that might be supplemental entries.

"Naturally, more money, more everything—and especially better-bred horses, will come from this," Keith Asmussen said.

The productive stallions Tapiture (a multiple graded-stakes winner standing in Kentucky), grade 1 winner El Deal (Louisiana), and grade 1 sire Custom for Carlos (Louisiana) lead the catalog with six entrants apiece. Other prominent racehorses and proven sires represented by their progeny include 2018 Triple Crown winner Justify, Bolt d'Oro, Classic Empire, Good Magic, Kantharos, Malibu Moon, Midshipman, and Practical Joke.

(continued on page 21)



SALES UPDATE

TEXAS 2-YEAR-OLDS IN TRAINING

TEXAS 2-YEAR-OLDS IN TRAINING SALE PROVING UPWARD TREND

(continued from page 20)

First-crop stallions are well represented through champions Vino Rosso and Mitole, along with grade 1 winners Catholic Boy and Yoshida. Also with progeny in the catalog: five-time grade 2 winner Catalina Cruiser; major winners Copper Bullet and Maximus Mischief (a son of internationally prominent sire Into Mischief).

As always, Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma stallions are represented in the catalog, including leading Texas stallion Bradester. In his second season at stud in Texas at Forks of the Paluxy, the grade 1-winning Mr Speaker, already the sire of two grade 1 winners, has the accredited Texas-bred filly She Speaks in the sale as Hip 103, consigned by Asmussen Horse Center.

Mark Collinsworth, who with wife Lori bought and stands Mr Speaker, will be at the sale as both a buyer and seller. He expects to purchase several fillies that they ultimately can breed to Mr Speaker. Collinsworth is also a minority partner in CJ Thoroughbreds' pinhooking venture that will be selling a handful of horses bought last summer as yearlings.

"These sales are great," Collinsworth said. "There's so much enthusiasm now, just with the house bill they passed a few years ago that redirected \$25 million to the Texas horse industry. There's a lot of positive indications for this sale, and there are some

very nice-looking horses in there. The Texas Thoroughbred Association has done a great job. All the owners and breeders have stepped up."

Last year, 88 horses sold at the auction for a total of \$3,050,700, compared with 89 selling for \$2.91 million in 2021, then a record for the sale under TTA



COURTESY OF TEXAS THOROUGHBRED ASSOCIATION

(L-R) Mark and Lori Collinsworth with Mr Speaker at Forks of the Paluxy Farm

leadership. The 2022 average price was \$34,667 and median \$28,000, compared with \$32,671 and \$20,000 in 2021.

Accredited Texas-breds proved a hot commodity. Overall, the 31 Texas-bred 2-year-olds that sold at auction last year, most but not necessarily all at the TTA sale, averaged \$47,506. That was up a whopping 60% over the then-record \$29,674 for the 23 Texas-bred 2-year-olds sold at auction in 2021.

"This is the largest catalog we've had in a while," said Al Pike, whose family's Opelousas, La.-based Pike Racing was last year's leading consignor by total sales at \$664,000. "There seems to be a good market there for the right horses. I think we're bringing a really good group that will be well received. We've got some really good Texas-breds for the first time in a while. We've got some good Louisiana-breds. We try to have something for everybody."

The 2023 2-Year-Olds In Training Sale catalog can be downloaded at www.TTASales.com.

This press release has been edited for content and style by BloodHorse Staff. BH

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JOCKEY ATZENI ON STARTING SEASON WITHOUT A RETAINER

By David Milnes/Racing Post

Andrea Atzeni has bagged a key early big-race ride on Al Mubhir in the Pertemps Network Lincoln Handicap at Doncaster April 1 as he embarks on his first season without a retainer in nine years.

The 32-year-old enjoyed multiple group 1 successes all over the world in his role as retained jockey to owner Sheikh Mohammed Obaid Al Maktoum until that came to an end last year, and before that he filled a similar role for Qatar Racing.

Now back in the brave new world of freelancing, the Newmarket-based rider has hit lucky early after getting the call to ride William Haggas' unexposed Al Mubhir, who has been backed down to 7-2 favorite with William Hill from double-figure odds only a week ago. He remains 4-1 favorite with Coral and Ladbrokes.

Commenting on his new venture, Atzeni said: "I'm freelancing this year, which is a bit of a change as I've been a retained rider for the past nine years. Firstly with Qatar Racing and then Sheikh Obaid, and I'm hoping to be busy and I'm looking forward to it. The quality may not be as easy to find, but I'm sure we'll be getting plenty of rides.

"There are pros and cons with these retained roles. Obviously, there is a contract there and there is money coming in even before you've even sat on a horse. You're riding for a big owner and there will be nice horses there, but if a good horse comes along elsewhere, I knew I probably wouldn't be able to ride it next time as I would have to go somewhere else as part of the retainer. Now I'm freelance, if a good horse



EDWARD WHITAKER/RACING POST

(L-R) Richard Kingscote and Andrea Atzeni

comes along, I'll be able to commit to it."

Atzeni, who has already enjoyed major success in Bahrain and Qatar this year, said: "I'm not as committed to anybody and I'll ride for as many people as I can. As soon as I got back from Bahrain I kept myself busy and tried to ride winners to get the ball rolling. I don't have anyone in particular I will be riding for, but I have a good agent in Steve Croft."

On his Town Moor mount, he said: "I've won everything else at Doncaster, including the St. Leger (G1), but I've never won the Lincoln. I've not had that many rides in it, as it usually clashes with Dubai World Cup (G1) weekend, and I'm usually at Doncaster only on the Sunday.

"It's a great ride to pick up and not just because he's favorite. He's trained by William Haggas, who has won it four times before, I believe. It looks like the ground is going to be soft, heavy in places, which he won on last year."

For more European racing, sales, and bloodstock news, visit [RacingPost.com](https://www.racingpost.com). BH

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DOYLE SET TO RETURN FROM INJURY AT NEWCASTLE ON FRIDAY

By Maddy Playle/Racing Post

Hollie Doyle will return to action at Newcastle March 31 after overcoming complications with an injury sustained earlier this year.

The leading rider dislocated and fractured her elbow and ruptured ligaments around it when her mount, The Perfect Crown, suffered a fatal injury at Wolverhampton Jan. 16. However, she has been cleared to ride and is booked to partner Rhythm N Hooves at Newcastle on Friday and four horses on the first day of the turf season.

She said: "I did the rehab for a month and my specialist didn't think it needed any surgery, and then a month into it he did another MRI and he realized my ligaments were completely ruptured, even though I could do pull-ups, push-ups, and pretty much everything and was almost ready to come back riding.

"It was quite a technical operation where he repaired my ligaments, but thankfully they're sorted out now, and I'm ready to go."

Doyle will partner the Richard Spencer-trained Revich in the April 1 Pertemps Network Lincoln, while Tempus, who won four times last season, is due to return on the same card for her boss Archie Watson.



Hollie Doyle

She said: "I don't know a lot about Revich, but he seems to go well on soft ground, which is obviously a bonus. It's a competitive race and you can bump into some future stars in the Lincoln in most years.

"Tempus will run in the Doncaster Mile. He ran abroad in Qatar, we realized that's not for him, but his form last year and what he achieved was incredible, so hopefully, we can get him back on track."

The rider credits having stars to look forward to for keeping her in good spirits. She is excited to be reunited with last year's Coventry Stakes (G2) winner, Bradsell, among others.

"I'm really lucky because some jockeys don't have as much to look forward to as I have, so it's kept me positive," she said. "Bradsell looks in terrific form and he could be anything. He could head towards the trial at Ascot, the Pavilion Stakes.

"I haven't seen Nashwa yet, but I've heard good things and I'm really looking forward to getting back on her. Hopefully, Trueshan can go back to Nottingham for the Further Flight and the ground this time of year tends to suit him, but it depends on how happy Alan (King) is with him."

For more European racing, sales, and bloodstock news, visit RacingPost.com. BH

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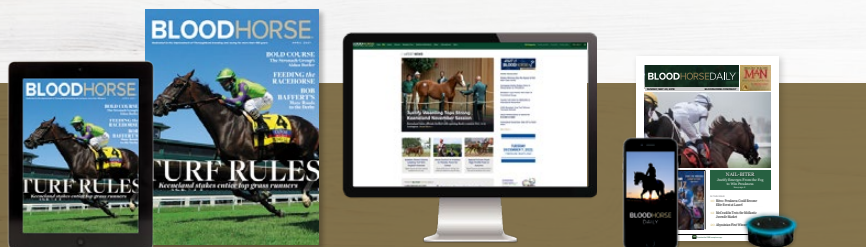
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PEDIGREE ANALYSIS

WITH ALAN PORTER

TWO PHIL'S FOLLOWS IN HARD SPUN'S HOOFPRIINTS

By Alan Porter

[@pedigreeconsult](#)

Even though it is run over an all-weather surface, the Jeff Ruby Steaks (G3) can't be overlooked as a Kentucky Derby (G1) trial. It has actually seen a winner go on to triumph at Churchill Downs—Animal Kingdom scored in what was then the Vinery Racing Spiral Stakes (G3) in 2011, a more recent success than that achieved by winners of other established Derby trials, the Louisiana Derby (G2), Toyota Blue Grass Stakes (G1), and Wood Memorial Stakes (G2). And of course last year's shock Derby scorer, Rich Strike, earned his way into the classic with a third in the Jeff Ruby.

This year's Jeff Ruby saw an impressive performance by Two Phil's, who powered clear to score by 5 1/2 lengths in a time just 0.31 off the track record. In doing so, he earned a Beyer Speed Figure of 101, the highest for any 3-year-old colt in 2023, which is made all the more impressive by the fact that it was achieved over nine furlongs.

How much of Two Phil's performance can be attributed to the surface—this was his first try on anything but dirt—and how much due to natural progression remains to be seen. Looking at his form, however, it can be seen that he has been improving with almost every start. His first two wins were at tracks where one doesn't generally find future classic contenders. He broke his maiden at Colonial Downs on his second start, and then recorded a nearly 10-length tally in the Shakopee Juvenile Stakes at Canterbury Park.

A distant seventh behind Forte in the Claiborne Breeders' Futurity (G1), Two Phil's rebounded three weeks later to capture the Street Sense Stakes (G3) in the slop at Churchill Downs by 5 1/4 lengths. This year, he opened the campaign with a second to Instant Coffee in the Lecomte Stakes (G3), and followed up with a third in the Risen Star Stakes (G2).

By coincidence, Two Phil's sire, Hard Spun, also took the Jeff Ruby, run that year as the Lane's End Stakes (G2), back in 2007, the race's second year on the all-weather. Hard Spun went on to finish second

HARD SPUN, b, 2004	Danzig, 1977	Northern Dancer, 1961	Nearctic
		Pas de Nom, 1968	Natalma
TWO PHIL'S ch, c March 16, 2020	Turkish Tryst, 1991	Turkoman, 1982	Admiral's Voyage
		Darbyvail, 1984	Petitioner
MIA TORRI, dkb/br, 2013	General Quarters, 2006	Sky Mesa, 2000	Alydar
		Ecology, 2001	Taba
Flip the Stone, 2006	Flip the Stone, 2006	Birdstone, 2001	Roberto
		Flippy Diane, 1994	Luiana
			Pulpit
			Caress
			Unbridled's Song
			Gdansk's Honour
			Grindstone
			Dear Birdie
			Aaron's Concorde
			Elegant Edythe

to Street Sense in the Kentucky Derby, and his other achievements that term included wins in the King's Bishop Stakes (G1), Kentucky Cup Classic (G2), and Le Comte Stakes (G3), seconds in the Breeders' Cup Classic (G1) and Haskell Invitational Stakes (G1), and a third in the Preakness Stakes (G1). At the end of the year, he was retired to Darley alongside his contemporaries Street Sense and Any Given Saturday, who along with Curlin had formed a particularly contentious group of 3-year-olds.

A son of Danzig, Hard Spun made a tremendous start to his stud career, with a first Northern Hemisphere crop that yielded 17 individual stakes winners, a figure that stood as a world record until surpassed by Uncle Mo (who was represented at the weekend by undefeated Louisiana Derby winner Kingsbarns). That first crop was headed by champion 3-Year-Old Filly Questing and the Mother Goose Stakes (G1) victress Zo Impressive.

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COUDY PHOTOGRAPHY

Two Phil's wins the Jeff Ruby Steaks at Turfway Park



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(continued from page 24)

Hard Spun has 77 Northern Hemisphere-sired stakes winners to his name, including other grade 1 winners Hard Not to Like, Silver State, Wicked Strong, Hard Not to Love, Hard Aces, Spun to Run, Aloha West, Hardest Core, Out for a Spin, and Smooth Roller. He's also enjoyed a measure of success with his Southern Hemisphere crops sired in Australia, which have produced 20 stakes winners, including three grade 1 winners. Hard Spun is also a rapidly emerging broodmare sire, including champion 2-Year-Old and highly successful second-season sire Good Magic.

Two Phil's dam, Mia Torri, is by the Sky Mesa horse General Quarters. She was a smart runner, taking the Sugar Maple Stakes and Sunshine Millions Distaff Stakes, and earning seconds in the Charles Town Oaks (G3) and Bed o' Roses Invitational Stakes (G3). Her dam, the unraced Birdstone mare Flip the Stone, is out of Flippy Diane, whose victory in the Maryland Million Distaff Handicap singles her out as the most significant daughter of her sire, Aaron's Concorde (a son of French champion 2-Year-Old Super Concorde). There is only



Mia Torri wins the 2017 Sugar Maple Stakes at Charles Town

one other stakes winner under Two Phil's fourth dam, Elegant Edythe (by Northern Dancer's close relative North Sea), and none under his fifth or sixth dams.

In fact, one doesn't come to real class until Two Phil's ninth dam, War Plumage, who after breaking her maiden in the Coaching Club American Oaks, went

on to add titles as co-champion 3-Year-Old Filly of 1939 and champion Handicap Mare of 1940. Her dam, War Feathers—a record-breaking yearling fetching \$50,500 way back in 1925—was by Man o' War out of the imported English dam Tuscan Red, a great-granddaughter of the mare Ornament, who had the distinction of not only being a sister to English Triple Crown winner Ormonde, generally

acknowledged to be the greatest runner of the 19th century, but also dam of Sceptre, a filly who won four of the five English classics.

War Plumage also appears as the seventh dam of the ill-fated 2006 Kentucky Derby victor, Barbaro. Through another channel—War Feathers' half sister Leghorn—Tuscan Red is also ancestress of the 1963 Kentucky Derby scorer, Chateaugay, and of Little Current, a fast-finishing fifth in the Kentucky Derby and successful in the Preakness Stakes (G1) and Belmont Stakes (G1).

Hard Spun's second dam, Darbyvail, is a half sister to Little Current, meaning that Tuscan Red appears as the eighth dam of Hard Spun, and 12th dam of Two Phil's. The significance, though, lies not with the specific name of the common ancestor, but that the sire and dam of Two Phil's share the same mitochondrial haplotype, and that given the quality of Hard Spun as a runner and sire, it's likely that he owns nuclear dna that is likely to combine with that haplotype (the 'L' haplotype). This likelihood is increased the fact that all four of Two Phil's grandparents, six of his eight great-grandparents, and 11 of 16 great-great grandparents are also from the 'L' mtDNA line. **BH**



Hard Spun wins the 2007 Lane's End Stakes at Turfway Park

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RACE RESULTS PRESENTED BY THE JOCKEY CLUB



WATCH REPLAYS BY CLICKING ON THE RACE NAME

BLACK TYPE STAKES

TRAQ Classic Sprint S.

Will Rogers Downs, 3/28, \$55,000, 3yo/up, 6f (dirt), 1:10.46, track fast.

- 1—**Fly to the Bank**, 124, b g, 6\$33,000
Euroears—Take It and Fly, by Kingkiowa
O—Juan Carlos Gallegos, B—James E. Helzer (OK), T—Steve Martin, J—Obed Sanchez
- 2—**Mesa Moon**, 118, dk b/br g, 6...\$11,000
Sky Mesa—Creative Spirit, by Smarty Jones
O—Cimarron TTT Farms LLC, B—Cimarron TTT Farms, LLC (OK), T—J. Alan Williams, J—Alberto Pusac
- 3—**Tommyhawk**, 118, dk b/br g, 6...\$6,050
Kick On—Saron's Time, by Timebank
O—Kim Swango, B—Randy E. Swango (OK), T—Randy E. Swango, J—David Cabrera

Margins: 2, 1¼, 1. **Others:** Shannon C (\$3,300), Mister Wayside (\$1,650). [View Equibase Chart](#)

ALLOWANCE RESULTS

Mahoning Valley Racecourse, Race 2, ALW

3/28, \$25,900, 3yo/up, 8f (dirt), 1:42.22, track good.
1—**Gullane**, 124, gr/ro c, 4, Bernardini—Daydreamin Gracie, by Domestic Dispute, \$16,835, O—PTK, LLC, B—PTK, LLC (KY), T—William D. Cowans, J—Jose A. Bracho

Margin: neck, 4 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Mahoning Valley Racecourse, Race 4, ALW

3/28, \$26,400, 3yo/up, f/m, 6f (dirt), 1:12.54, track good.

1—**Shutupandshakeit**, 124, dk b/br m, 5, More Than Ready—Greenfield d'Oro, by Medaglia d'Oro, \$16,368, O—Jerry Jamgotchian, B—Southern Equine Stables, LLC (KY), T—Eric R. Reed, J—Gabriel Lagunes

Sale History: 2021 KEENOV, \$15,000, 2020 OBSAPR, \$195,000, 2019 FTKJUL, \$280,000.

Margin: 6¼, 5 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Mahoning Valley Racecourse, Race 7, ALW

3/28, \$26,400, 3yo/up, 8f (dirt), 1:41.17, track good.

1—**Soros**, 124, ch g, 6, Commissioner—Eastern Ruckus, by Eastern Echo, \$15,840, O—Brent Malmstrom, B—Shain Crain (KY), T—Jonathan Wong, J—Luis Alberto Batista

Sale History: 2019 OBSAPR, (\$95,000 RNA), 2018 KEESEP, \$40,000.

Margin: 3¾, 6 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Mahoning Valley Racecourse, Race 8, ALW

3/28, \$36,200, 3yo/up, 6f (dirt), 1:13.18, track good.

1—**Midnight Warship**, 124, dk b/br g, 5, **Midshipman**—All About Allison, by City Zip, \$21,720, O—Mitten Mates LLC and D & D Racing Stable, B—Mr. & Mrs. Duncan Lloyd (OH), T—William D. Cowans, J—Jose A. Bracho

Sale History: 2019 KEESEP, (\$52,000 RNA).

Margin: 3½, 6 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Parx Racing, Race 2, AOC

3/28, \$42,000, 4yo/up, 6f (dirt), 1:12.36, track good.

1—**Rich's Way**, 121, b g, 4, **Bodemeister**—Halo Humor, by Distorted Humor, \$25,200, O—Richard Malouf, B—SF Bloodstock LLC (KY), T—Scott A. Lake, J—Abner Adorno

Sale History: 2021 OBSMAR, \$150,000, 2019 KEENOV, \$5,000.

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

Parx Racing, Race 9, AOC

3/28, \$58,000, 4yo/up, 6f (dirt), 1:12.12, track good.

1—**Five Dreams**, 121, dk b/br g, 5, **Cinco Charlie**—Tranquility Dream, by Proud Citizen, \$34,800, O—Miguel A. Rodriguez, B—Ralph Kinder & Erv Woolsey (KY), T—Miguel A. Rodriguez, J—Andrew Wolfsont

Margin: 1, 7 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Parx Racing, Race 10, AOC

3/28, \$57,000, 4yo/up, 8.5f (dirt), 1:47.26, track good.

1—**Dreaming of Gerry**, 121, dk b/br g, 5, **Liam's Map**—Nothing to Declare, by Vindication, \$34,200, O—3 Loose Screws Stable, B—Stephen Shoultz (KY), T—Robert Mosco, J—Silvestre Gonzalez

Sale History: 2019 KEESEP, \$85,000, 2019 KEEJAN, \$50,000.

Margin: 2¼, 9 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Sunland Park, Race 8, ALW

3/28, \$45,600, 3yo/up, 5.5f (dirt), 1:03.08, track fast.

1—**Probate**, 124, gr/ro g, 6, Pro Prado—Aquarellist, by Ole', \$27,360, O—C. P. Hourigan, B—C. P. Hourigan (NM), T—Ever Olguin, J—Jorge Carreno

Margin: 2¼, 7 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Turf Paradise, Race 2, AOC

3/28, \$21,400, 3yo/up, f/m, 6.5f (dirt), 1:15.97, track fast.

1—**Taking Charge Desi**, 122, ch f, 4, **Will Take Charge**—Hurricane Bernie, by Sea of Secrets, \$13,135, O—Rodney E. Paulson, B—Will Take Charge Syndicate & Charles V. Muth (KY), T—Valorie Lund, J—Jose Luis Zunino

Sale History: 2020 KEESEP, \$7,500.

Margin: 1, 6 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Will Rogers Downs, Race 3, ALW

3/28, \$25,000, 3yo/up, 6f (dirt), 1:11.03, track fast.

1—**Time Machine**, 124, b g, 6, **Giant's Causeway**—Emma's Encore, by Congrats, \$15,000, O—Bankroll Racing and Samuel E. Shaw III, B—Narola, LLC (KY), T—Juan Padilla, J—Gerardo Mora

Sale History: 2018 KEESEP, \$420,000, 2017 KEENOV, \$300,000.

Margin: 2, 4 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

MAIDEN RESULTS

Parx Racing, Race 1, MSW

3/28, \$50,000, 3yo, 8.32f (dirt), 1:47.72, track good.

1—**Gun Collector**, 121, ch c, 3, **Gun Runner**—Wembley, by Bernardini, \$30,000, O—Lael Stables, B—Blackstone Farm LLC (PA), T—Michael Stidham, J—Mychel J. Sanchez

Sale History: 2021 FTSAUG, \$550,000.

Margin: 2¾, 7 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Parx Racing, Race 7, MSW

3/28, \$55,000, 3yo, 7f (dirt), 1:27.19, track good.

1—**My Imagination**, 121, b g, 3, **Lea**—La Contessa, by Congrats, \$33,000, O—John L. Clair Thoroughbred Racing, B—John L. Clair (KY), T—William E. Morey, J—Jeremy Laprida

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

Sunland Park, Race 1, MSW

3/28, \$36,800, 3yo, 6f (dirt), 1:09.95, track fast.

1—**Diabolical Fire**, 121, ch g, 3, **Attila's Storm**—Diabolical Dame, by Diabolical, \$22,080, O—Brooks, Joe Dee, Bryant, Scott and Hubbard, Derrol, B—Joe Dee Brooks, Scott Bryant & Derrol Hubbard (NM), T—Todd W. Fincher, J—Alfredo J. Juarez, Jr.

Margin: 7¼, 8 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Will Rogers Downs, Race 2, MSW

3/28, \$21,000, 3yo/up, f/m, 6f (dirt), 1:12.31, track fast.

1—**Our Davina**, 120, gr/ro f, 3, **Midshipman**—Cherryblossommiss, by Langfuhr, \$12,600, O—Family Stone Racing, B—Michael T. Barnett (KY), T—Scott E. Young, J—Floyd Wethy Jr.

Sale History: 2021 FTKOCT, \$120,000, 2021 FTKJUL, \$37,000.

Margin: 2¼, 4 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)

Will Rogers Downs, Race 4, MSW

3/28, \$25,200, 3yo/up, 8f (dirt), 1:39.10, track fast.

1—**Wilbert**, 124, ch g, 4, **Wilburn**—Rosemaui, by Austinpower (JPN), \$14,604, O—Michael D. Major, B—Dr. Michael Major DVM (OK), T—Joe S. Offolter, J—Richard E. Eramia

Margin: 9¾, 7 starters. [View Equibase Chart](#)