

NEWSMAKERS OF THE YEAR

Trot recalls some of this year's horses, people and events that made headlines throughout 2012.

COMPILED BY BRITTNEY MAYOTTE

BIG WINNERS



MARKET SHARE ... One of the featured stars in trainer Linda Toscano's storybook season, 3YO trotter MARKET SHARE leads all horses in North America for earnings this year thanks in part to victories in a pair of million dollar races – the \$1.5 million Hambletonian and \$1 million Canadian Trotting Classic.

MICHAELS POWER ... Three-year-old pacer Michaels Power showcased his tenacity winning not just one, but two separate heat races this summer for driver Scott Zeron and trainer Casie Coleman. Canada's richest horse of the season took home both the Confederation Cup and Little Brown Jug trophies along with numerous other hardware.

DAVE PALONE surpassed legend Herve Filion to become the winningest driver in harness racing history on July 5 at The Meadows, notching his 15,181st career victory. Palone has continued to rack up the wins since, pushing the record well beyond 15,400.



FOILED AGAIN became the richest pacer in harness racing history with his victory in the Canadian Pacing Derby surpassing Gallo Blue Chip's \$4,293,108 earnings record. "I would say becoming the richest Standardbred is our goal now. That's all that's left in front of him," said Ron Burke, this year's leading trainer in North America. The eight-year-old pacer currently sits fourth on the earnings list behind trotters Jag De Bellouet (\$4.97 million US), Moni Maker (\$5.58 million US) and Varenne (\$5.63 million US).

STREAKERS



Pacing filly **MALABRIGO** completed a perfect sophomore season going 16-for-16 in Maritime stakes action for trainer-driver Marc Campbell.



Two-year-old trotter **WHEELING N DEALIN** started his career with a perfect nine-win season, capped off by stakes victories in the William Wellwood Memorial and Breeders Crown for driver Sylvain Filion and trainer Dustin Jones.

JUDGES DISCRETION

ran up a 13-race win streak during this year's meet at Yorkton Exhibition for trainer-driver Tyler Redwood and his father, owner Kelvin Godlien. The seven-year-old pacing mare's win streak, which ran from May to early September, was almost cut short when she was second-placed-first at the eight-win mark after the first-place finisher was set back for causing interference. The streak eventually did end during Yorkton's closing card when she finished third.



RETIREMENTS

Some of this year's retirees include **HERVE FILION** along with four-legged stars **ABBEY ROAD C, AMERICAN JEWEL, BIG BAD JOHN, CHAPTER SEVEN, DREAMFAIR ETERNAL, SEE YOU AT PEELERS, VINTAGE MASTER,** and **WON THE WEST.**

MEMORABLE UPSETS

Three-year-old trotting filly **PERSONAL STYLE** pulled off a 57-1 stunner in the Hambletonian Oaks. After favourites Check Me Out and Maven broke stride, the Richard 'Nifty' Norman trainee hauled down Win Missy B to prevail by a neck with David Miller aboard.



Three-year-old pacer **THINKING OUT LOUD** provided driver Randy Waples and Hall of Fame trainer Bob McIntosh with their first victory in the coveted \$1.5 million North America Cup as he rallied home to win by half a length over Time To Roll, stablemate Dapper Dude and favourite Sweet Lou in a four-across finish.



"I wouldn't trade my horse for San Pail. I think we have a huge future," stated trainer Jeff Gillis early in the year prior to watching **MISTER HERBIE** upset the defending Horse of the Year by a nose in the Glorys Comet Final. The four-year-old trotter, driven Jody Jamieson, later upset favourite Chapter Seven in the Maple Leaf Trot by three-quarters of a length.

UNDERDOGS

Sired by pacer Cams Rocket, Richard Hans' three-year-old trotter **GOOGOO GAAGAA** took the harness racing world by storm when he emerged from the Maryland Sire Stakes program to tackle the Grand Circuit and produced several speed records, including the fastest trotting mile ever on a five-eighths oval with a 1:50.4 victory in the Earl Beal Jr. Memorial at Pocono.



Despite having only faced stakes company once, the connections of **INTIMIDATE** wrote a cheque for \$62,500 - nearly half of their gelding's earnings at the time - to supplement to the Breeders Crown Three-Year-Old Colt Trot. The gamble paid off as Intimidate swept both the elimination and final for trainer Luc Blais, who owns and bred the colt with Judith Farrow.

"A monkey could have won with this horse tonight,"

stated driver Ron Pierce in the winner's circle.

"A monkey could have made a mistake,"

chimed 71-year-old Farrow afterwards.

"Ron drove him perfectly."

BATTLES

MARTY ADLER VS. DWIGHT DUNCAN

Longtime track announcer Marty Adler took on Ontario Finance Minister Dwight Duncan this summer in a publicized battle over the facts regarding Ontario racing's economic impact. Adler, who landed in hot water with the Ontario Racing Commission after a complaint was made when he told a few jokes about the Finance Minister at the Leamington Fair, later confronted Duncan on two occasions at public events in the Windsor riding seeking answers on why the profitable Slots-At-Racetracks program was cancelled. Adler was denied answers both times and his email requests to Duncan's office failed to produce any further clarification on the situation.

JOE THOMSON VS. DWIGHT DUNCAN

Thomson: "We've got a terrific investment involved and the [Ontario] government did something very much like Bernie Madoff. They put the framework in place and then they pulled the rug out from under you and changed the deal midstream without giving people a chance to get their investments back."

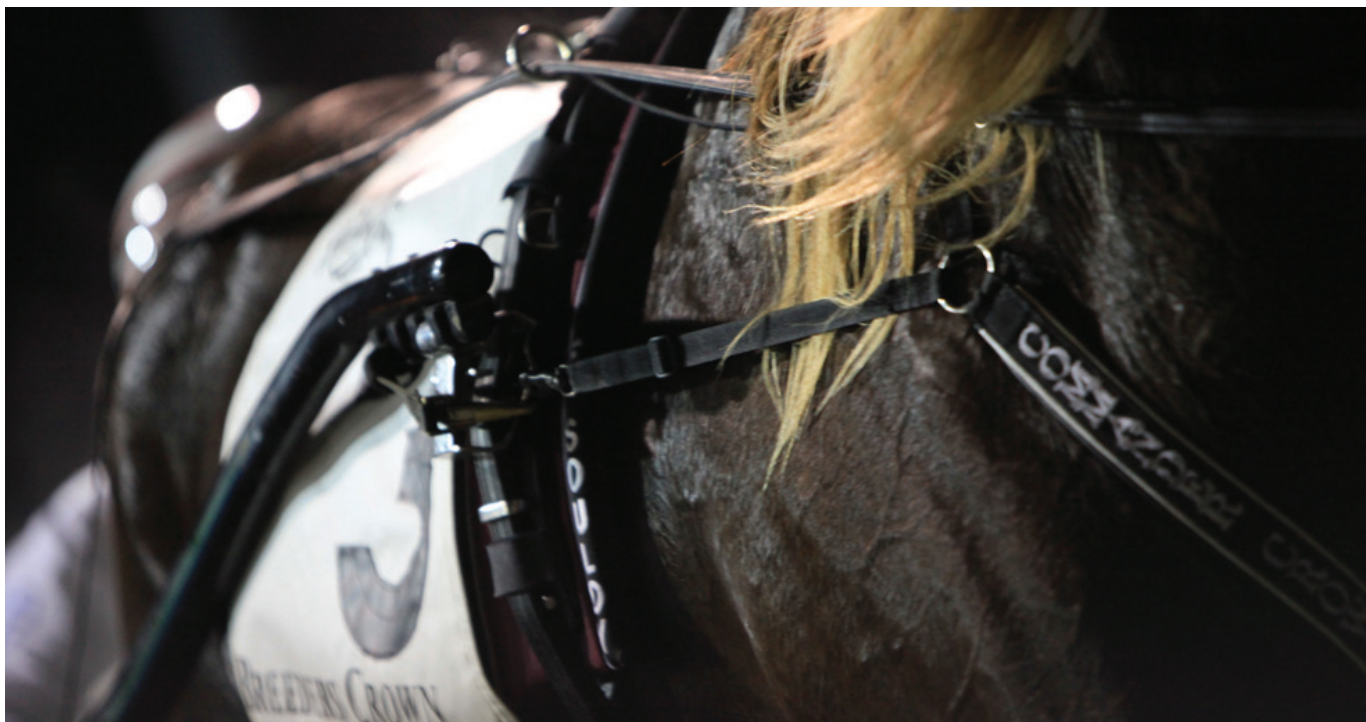
Duncan: "Mr. Thomson's comparison to Bernie Madoff is ridiculous. Mr. Madoff set up a Ponzi scheme that was used to furnish a lavish lifestyle. We are ending a program that took money that should go to Ontario schools and hospitals and gave it to, among others, wealthy people like Mr. Thomson - proving again that when we are eliminating the deficit while protecting schools and hospitals, the program should indeed come to an end."

Thomson: "Of course we need to protect our schools and hospitals but we also need to preserve our businesses and farm lands. Perhaps Mr. Duncan as a politician and administrator doesn't understand the theory of private business and investments. I'm sure all the people who invested with Mr. Madoff would not have done so, had they known ahead of time that the terms of the deal were going to change and that they would be screwed out of their investment. Does that sound like something that Mr. Duncan of the Liberal party has proposed in his shell game?"

➔ Super Final SHOWDOWN

Three-year-old pacing fillies **BLUE STAR BEAUTY** and **CREDIT CARD JUNKIE** battled all season long for Alberta dominance hooking up one last time in their season-ending Super Final. In a two horse breakaway down the stretch, Credit Card Junkie prevailed by a neck for Hall of Fame horseman Keith Clark.

JET SETTERS



Trotters **ARCH MADNESS** and **WINDSONG GEANT** both travelled to Europe in May to compete in Norway and Sweden stakes. Arch Madness finished second in the Elitlopp and third in the Oslo Grand Prix. **WISHING STONE** returned

from an extended stay in Europe at the end of the summer after winning the Copenhagen Cup and finishing second in the Jubilee Trophy this year. Sweden's **COMMANDER CROWE** booked a round trip to Canada to compete in the Breeders

Crown Open Trot where he finished third for the second consecutive year. England's **LANESIDE LEXUS**, a multiple stakes winner across the pond, invaded Canada where she quickly found success amongst WEG's Open pacing mares.

Putting his Avion Air Miles to good use, driver **JIM MARINO** travelled back and forth from his home province of British Columbia to Alberta to rack up multiple stakes wins during a career-year, including two B.C. Breeders Stakes with Now Playing and Two Stitches and an Alberta Super Final with Outlaw Beacon.

Two-time O'Brien Award winner **MARK MACDONALD** relocated to U.S. early this year and has since cracked the top 10 driver standings at Yonkers. He also drove Bolt The Duer to victories in the Adios, KYSS Championship and Messenger.

BREAKOUT PERFORMANCE

Beach Babies ... The first crop of Hall of Famer Somebeachsomewhere broke No Nukes' long standing record for two-year-old crop single-season earnings of \$4.16 million set in 1990 with Metro Pace champion Captaintreacherous leading the way as the richest and fastest freshman of the year for trainer Tony Alagna. After the colt's first sub-1:50 win in the Woodrow Wilson, this year's leading-money earning driver Tim Tetrick called his sire a "game changer" for harness racing. Some of this season's other standout 'Beach' babies include Somewhereovrainbow, L Dees Lioness, Apprentice Hanover, Nikki Beach, Parlee Beach and Sir Richard Z Tam.

COMEBACKS



Hall of Fame driver **STEVE CONDREN** returned to the sulky at the end of April after being given a clean bill of health following his battle with cancer. He picked up his first win on May 10 at Woodbine aboard three-year-old trotting filly Barbie And Ken.

PUT ON A SHOW, harness racing's richest pacing filly at two and three, made an incredible comeback this year after missing her four-year-old season due to knee surgery. Put On A Show became the fastest mare of all time with her 1:47.3 victory in the Lady Liberty. She also won the Spring Of Hope Invitational, created by her co-owner Richard Young and WEG, contributing 50 per cent of her earnings from the race to the 'A Spring of Hope' charity, which builds wells for schools in impoverished areas in Africa.

CONTROVERSY

'LUCK' CANCELLED... After being picked up for a second season, HBO's horse racing drama 'Luck' was cancelled just part way through season one following the death of three horses during production.

NYSRWB RULING... The New York State Racing and Wagering Board announced in late May that it suspended trainer Lou Pena for illegally drugging horses in nearly 700 races in New York State and amassing more than 1,700 equine drug violations. The violations were not found via post-race testing, but instead following an unprecedented joint review of veterinarian records, which found substances administered to horses outside the permitted timeframe as set forth by Board rules.

NEW BRUNSWICK GOVERNMENT... The New Brunswick Government announced as part of its budget in March that it would no longer be providing supplemental funding to Horse Racing New Brunswick in support of the harness racing industry beginning in 2013-14.

SASKATCHEWAN GOVERNMENT... The Saskatchewan Government also announced in March that the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority would no longer be providing funding to the province's horse racing industry in 2013.



The **QUEBEC JOCKEY CLUB**, led by Tony Infilise, has begun to rebuild after racetrack operator Attractions Hippiques went bankrupt three years ago and all four racetracks closed, devastating the province's racing industry. Despite the announcement earlier this year that Hippodrome de Quebec was being bulldozed for a new arena, the QJC managed to strike a deal to purchase the vacant Hippodrome Trois-Rivieres for \$4 million. In September, the organization launched its first 10-day live meet at the track now renamed Hippodrome 3R with 6,000 fans pouring in for its inaugural card. The QJC, which is opening new off-track betting parlours, announced that purses for the Quebec-bred series for two and three-year-olds will increase to \$50,000 in 2013, \$75,000 for 2014 and \$100,000 in 2015.

Five-year-old As Promised mare **RIVER LASS**, Alberta's 2010 Horse of the Year, returned to Western Canada this year and dominated the distaffers after campaigning on the WEG circuit in Ontario for a large portion of her 2011 season. She has 14 wins and counting in Open action for trainer-driver Kelly Hoerd.

DRUMMOND & OMAFRA REPORTS... Following the release of the Drummond Report in February, which recommended the review of the Slots-At-Racetrack program for value-for-money, the Ontario Liberal government decided to scrap the program altogether as part of the Ontario Lottery & Gaming Corporation's modernized gaming plans, sending the provincial horse racing industry into a state of uncertainty. Premier Dalton McGuinty and Finance Minister Dwight Duncan refused to acknowledge the value of the horse racing industry on Ontario's economy while spouting misinformation to media outlets and even launching attack radio ads prompting numerous stakeholders, organizations and politicians to sign petitions and host rallies in support of the SAR program and racing industry. With the OLG issuing siteholder termination notices to tracks and considering American gaming companies as casino operators, the government arranged a panel of three former cabinet ministers - Elmer Buchanan, John Snobelen and John Wilkinson - to assess how a \$50 million transitional fund could be used with the SAR program set to end in March 2013. After weeks of delays, the OMAFRA Report from the panel was released at the end of October stating that the industry is worth saving and \$50 million is not enough, but reinstating the SAR program would be a mistake.

SETBACKS



After fighting sickness on and off after the Glorys Comet in April, eight-year-old trotting titan **SAN PAIL** was sidelined for the rest of the season after suffering a right-hind ankle injury during a qualifier in June. The reigning Horse of the Year in both Canada and the U.S. is expected to start back jogging in December.

➔ After starting his aged career with world record performances in the Ben Franklin and Bobby Quillen, a victory in the Des Smith and runner-up finish in the Canadian Pacing Derby, **BETTERTHANCHEDDAR**'s season was cut short after he developed a foot abscess in his left front.

➔ Following a promising start to her aged career, O'Brien Award winner **CHINA PEARLS** developed a crack in her left hind pastern during the summer, ending her season. She is expected to make a full recovery and return to racing action next April.

➔ O'Brien Award winner **WARRAWEE NEDDY** started his sophomore campaign with a sizzling 1:49.2 qualifying mile at Mohawk, but was forced to miss his first scheduled stake, the Upper Canada Cup in May, due to sickness. His sophomore season continued to be a roller-coaster ride for his connections as he battled a virus and allergies.

➔ Racing and training accidents left multiple horsemen sidelined with serious injuries for lengthy periods of time throughout the year including **BEN BAILLARGEON, BILLY CARTER, MIKE DOWLING, JUSTIN HITE, GERRY HUDON, TONY KERWOOD, BOB MCINTOSH, DONNIE RUSSELL,** and **STU SOWERBY.**

PHENOMENONAL FOALS

White Bliss

Peter Congilose's bay mare Coochie Mama gave birth to a rare white colt named White Bliss by the bay stallion Art Major on May 6 at Fair Winds Farm in New Jersey. Meanwhile, Australia welcomed what is believed to be their first white Standardbred at Goulburn Valley Farm. Conceived through artificial insemination, the colt is by reputed sire Courage Under Fire and the well bred mare Telern Hilda.



Phoos Boy

Bob Montgomery's Art Colony foal named **PHOOS BOY** survived a horrific and unexplained gunshot wound to the neck that he suffered at just two and a half months old while turned out one evening this summer at a farm in Bishops Mills, Ontario with his mother Miss Poole. With months of care from Russell Equine Veterinary Service's Dr. Tiffany Richards and her colleagues, the colt has recovered remarkably well with hopes of making it to the races in the years to come.

