

HIDDEN CONNECTION WINNING THE 2021 POCAHONTAS S. (G3)

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Finding Connections

How Tommy Wenthe Cracked the Code with Connect

BY JOE NEVILLS

It can often take years for breeders to discern which broodmare pedigrees and physicals work best with a stallion to produce elite runners. Judging by the returns in 2021, Tommy Wenthe of St. Simon Place needed just a fraction of the time to crack the code with Connect.

Wenthe's program was responsible for arguably the two best runners from Connect's freshman season: Grade 1 winner Rattle N Roll and Grade 3 winner Hidden Connection. Both graded winners were born at the Lexington-based St. Simon Place, out of mares with modest pedigrees, produce records, and sale prices when the breeder acquired them.

This, Wenthe said, is where the common traits end. The pedigrees of Rattle N Roll and

Hidden Connection are completely different on the female side of the family, and Wenthe said the mares didn't look alike at all.

If Wenthe cracked the code with Connect, he'll be the first to admit it wasn't on purpose.

"There's no method to the madness for what I'm doing, and I try to tell everyone that," he said. "I'm not going out there and thinking I'm knowing what I'm doing. I'm staying within the realms of what works, as far as nicking. I try to breed the mares to stallions that I know are compatible, and then you're doing your physicals and all that. They were two different-looking mares, and we had so much good luck. I'm breeding five back to him this year, and I'm hoping

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"We had so much good luck. I'm breeding five back to Connect this year, and I'm hoping I can re-create it."



PHOTO BY JESSICA KIRSH / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

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	DINNER	SIGHTS	SHOP	LUNCH	DRINKS	TAKEOUT/ DELIVERY
 Gabby Gaudet TVG Analyst/Reporter Keeneland @gabby_gaudet_	Seviche 1538 Bardstown Road, #1156	Cherokee Park 745 Cochran Hill Road	Nulu / Peplum Boutique 800 Block of E Market & E Main Street/ 3636 Brownsboro Road	Holy Grale 1034 Bardstown Road	Repeal 101 W Main Street, Unit 101	Le Moo 2300 Lexington Road
 J.C. Phelps @jcpeats	Buck's 425 W Ormsby Avenue	Historic architecture of Old Louisville Old Louisville Neighborhood	Stoneware & Co. 731 Brent Street	Jack Fry's 1007 Bardstown Road	Hell or High Water 112 W Washington Street	J. Graham's Cafe, Brown Hotel (order the Hot Brown!) 335 W Broadway
 Rosa Hart The Lou Review @loufoodreviews	Sarino 1030 Goss Avenue	Walking the Reservoir Reservoir	Nulu Marketplace 800 Block of E Market & E Main Street	Shiraz Mediterranean Grill 1565 Bardstown Road	Limon y Sal 10000 Brownsboro Road	Village Anchor 11507 Park Road
 Leah Jane Hidden Louisville @hiddenlouisville	Come Back Inn 909 Swan Street	St. James Court St. James-Belgravia Historic District	Fleur de Flea Vintage Market 947 E Breckinridge Street	El Molcajete 2932 S 4th Street	META 425 W Chestnut Street	The Café 711 Brent Street
 Chris Sussman The BBQ Buddha @the_bbq_buddha	Jack Fry's 1007 Bardstown Road	Louisville Slugger Museum 800 W Main Street	Nulu Market Street 800 Block of E Market & E Main Street	The Café 711 Brent Street	Shopbar 950 Barret Avenue	Gralehaus 1001 Baxter Avenue
 Julia Hammonds Louisville Foodie @louisvillefoodie_	Cask 9980 Linn Station Road	Louisville Slugger Museum 800 W Main Street	Bardstown Road/ The Highlands	Taco Luchador 938 Baxter Avenue	Germantown Social 1318 McHenry Street	Highland Morning 1416 Bardstown Road

FINDING CONNECTIONS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

I can recreate it.”

The two broodmares that helped elevate Connect’s freshman season were purchased for a combined \$29,500: Jazz Tune, the dam of Rattle N Roll, was secured for \$20,000, while C J’s Gal was a \$9,500 purchase.

Wente said he was a fan of the top commercial sire Curlin, which made his Grade 1-winning son Connect a prime candidate for the mares. While many of Curlin’s offspring tend to flourish at longer distances and mature later, Wente was drawn to Connect’s precocity as a miler with speed.

Though Connect was a Grade 2 winner around two turns, his two most impressive victories were his gutsy score against older competition in the G1 Cigar Mile Handicap and his 4 ¾-length demolition of the G3 Westchester Stakes.

However, Wente was also realistic about his stock, and the economics of placing mares wisely relative to their price point. From that standpoint, Connect was a bit of a stretch, but the opportunity to be part of his first book of mares was too good to pass up.

“We were new to the business; we couldn’t afford to go to the big, proven horses, because I didn’t think my mares were good enough,” he said. “You’ve got to understand, I bought C J’s Gal for \$9,500, and Jazz Tune in foal for \$20,000. You’re not going to sit there and spend \$40,000, \$50,000, \$60,000 on a stud fee for them. I thought Connect was a lot for me personally, because he was \$20,000 when he first stood, but he was a first-year horse, and I just loved everything about him.”

Rattle N Roll was the third foal out of Jazz Tune, a winning Johannesburg mare who Wente bought in-foal to Mineshaft. After breaking his maiden at Churchill Downs as a juvenile, Rattle N Roll dominated the G1 Breeders’ Futurity at Keeneland, drawing off in the stretch to win by 4 ¼ lengths.

Wente sold the colt as a weanling for \$55,000 at the 2019 Keeneland November Breeding Stock Sale, and he said the feeling of seller’s remorse was immediate. He knew Rattle N Roll would go on to be a good runner, but he didn’t expect it to happen so soon.

“I was absolutely shocked,” he said. “[Jazz Tune’s] babies are just so late-maturing. They just need time to grow, because they’re kind of awkward looking. If you looked at Rattle N Roll as a 2-year-old, you’d think, ‘This horse is going to grow. He’s going to get way bigger.’”

That notion tracked for foals out of Jazz Tune, who Wente described as a lanky mare with some crookedness in a knee that a correct stallion would need to work against for the resulting foal.

A Virginia-born product of the vaunted Edward P. Evans breeding program, Jazz Tune didn’t break her maiden until May of her 3-year-old campaign. The extended family includes Grade 1 winners Another Review and No Review, but it takes some digging in the pedigree to find them.

Jazz Tune’s modest status when she met Connect ended up being beneficial for St. Simon Place’s commercial fortunes in the long-term, even if they seemed harrowing in the short-term. The mare was offered with Rattle N Roll in-utero at the 2018 Keeneland November sale, and she finished under her reserve with a final bid of \$55,000. Three years later, following her star foal’s Grade 1 success, Jazz Tune sold, pregnant to Liam’s Map, for \$585,000.

Though it was hard to let a young Rattle N Roll leave his care as a weanling, Wente conceded that the colt might not have reached his lofty status had he ended up with connections other than trainer Kenny McPeck and owner Lucky Seven Stable.

“These babies have to get into good hands,” he said. “It’s just the nature of the beast.”

Hidden Connection was the second foal out of C J’s Gal, an unplaced



TOMMY WENTE OF ST. SIMON PLACE / PHOTO BY WINNING IMAGES PHOTOGRAPHY

daughter of Awesome Again.

Racing for the partnership of Hidden Brook Farm and Black Type Thoroughbreds with trainer Bret Calhoun, Hidden Connection won on debut at Colonial Downs, then shipped to Churchill Downs to crush the G3 Pocahontas Stakes by 9 ¼ lengths. She finished her juvenile season with a fourth-place effort in the Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Fillies at Del Mar.

Her 3-year-old campaign has thus far been highlighted by the G2 Fair Grounds Oaks, where Hidden Connection pushed champion Echo Zulu to the limit, and was second by a nose.

C J’s Gal was a broodmare prospect when she was purchased by St. Simon Place at the 2016 Keeneland January Horses of All Ages Sale. Where Wente described Jazz Tune as a lankier mare, he said C J’s Gal was a more compact horse who passed that on to Hidden Connection.

Wente initially offered Hidden Connection as a weanling at the 2019 Keeneland November sale, where she was a \$49,000 RNA. He parted ways with the filly a year later at the Keeneland September sale for

\$40,000. She later sold as a 2-year-old for \$85,000.

“I watched her work at OBS, and I thought she could have some precocity,” he said. “They took her to a few 2-year-old sales, and she got better as the year went on.”

C J’s Gal is herself out of a multiple graded-placed mare: the Mizzen Mast daughter C J’s Leelee, a sibling to Grade 1 winner Capo Bastone.

C J’s Gal ended up becoming another windfall for the St. Simon Place operation. From a modest purchase price of \$9,500 as a broodmare prospect in 2016, she commanded \$450,000 pregnant to Frosted at last year’s Fasig-Tipton November Sale.

Though he might not claim to have the secret sauce, Wente said he was a big believer in the cross that produced Hidden Connection.

“It hits,” he said. “I’d advise anyone that has a mare from the Deputy Minister line [C J’s Gal’s paternal grandsire] to go right back to Curlin, because it works.”



RATTLE N ROLL WINNING THE 2021 BREEDERS’ FUTURITY (G1)

The Future of HISA

First Phase Set for July 1, But Legal Challenges Loom

BY JIM MULVIHILL

The Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act is forging on to implementation despite persistent legal challenges and logistical hurdles. The first phase of federal oversight of horse racing will go into effect July 1, when jurisdictions are expected to comply with new Racetrack Safety Program standards drafted by the Horseracing Safety and Integrity Authority (commonly shortened to “the Authority”). The rules and standards that make up the Racetrack Safety Program were approved in March by the Federal Trade Commission, which oversees the Authority.

The Racetrack Safety Program will bring higher standards to most racetracks, most notably through enhanced veterinary oversight; enhanced reporting requirements; collection and analysis of medication, treatment, injury, and fatality data; a voided claim rule; the transfer of claimed horses’ medical information; and jockey concussion and medical care reporting.

“These new rules will decrease fatalities by detecting horses with mild pre-existing conditions through expanded veterinary oversight and the review of medication and treatment records and training histories,” said Dr. Susan Stover, chair of the Racetrack Safety Committee. “They will also provide a window into understanding and preventing the development of mild injuries in the first place via uniform surface maintenance standards and ongoing data analysis.”

Tracks that are not compliant with the new standards will not be expected to reinvent themselves all at once; a one-year “provisional accreditation” will be extended to tracks that demonstrate continuous progress toward full compliance.

Legal Challenges Persist

The quick approval of the Racetrack Safety Program standards by the FTC raised the ire of HISA’s opponents. According to horsemen’s groups, the “rubber-stamping” of the proposals without any significant changes makes it appear as if the FTC is not reviewing the Authority’s mandates with a critical eye.

“This FTC order makes crystal clear that this private entity of self-appointed rule-makers (i.e., The Authority) has unfettered power without governmental oversight to control the horseracing industry,” said one piece of a lengthy statement from the National Horsemen’s Benevolent



PHOTO BY LW PHOTOGRAPHY / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

& Protective Association, which represents trainers and owners in the U.S. and Canada. “The illusion of governmental supervisory control was clearly dispelled with the FTC approving all of the Authority’s proposals without exception.”

The FTC’s role is a key piece of multiple legal challenges brought against HISA, which suggest that the authority of individual states is being transferred to a private entity in the Authority. That determination could hinge on whether the FTC is involved with HISA more in practice or in theory.

Two similar federal lawsuits were filed: one by the National HBPA and 12 of its state affiliates in Lubbock, Texas, and one by Oklahoma, West Virginia, and Louisiana, and supported by six additional states, in Lexington. The National HBPA case was dismissed on March 31 after U.S. District Judge James Wesley Hendrix deemed HISA to be constitutional, though he admitted appellate courts “may expand or restrict precedent.” The National HBPA said at the time of dismissal that it was considering its appeal options. A motion to dismiss the case filed in Kentucky remained pending at press time.

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A Place to Rest

Reflecting on the Lane's End Cemetery

BY JOE NEVILLS

The Lane's End stallion complex comprises several buildings, but its foundation sits under a patch of grass and ivy on its outskirts.

A half-circle of hedges to the southeast of the stallion barns conceals the farm's graveyard: a finely manicured resting place for champions and the ancestors of champions. The horses remembered here contributed to Lane's End's ascent into one of North America's leading Thoroughbred operations.

For all the living stars on the Lane's End property, farm tour and hospitality manager Ande Farish Day said the memorial to the stars of the past is one of the most popular destinations for visitors.

"During COVID, we did some virtual tours through Facebook, and it was one of our most requested virtual tours," she said. "It was one that we weren't sure we wanted to do, because it seemed kind of sad, but it was really fun for us to go through and make notes on all these horses that were here before I was here and learn about them."

The graveyard was constructed and landscaped before it was needed. As the farm's stallion operation opened and expanded in the mid-to-late 1980s, the natural order of life meant it would eventually have residents.

The first was Fappiano, who arrived at Lane's End in 1987 after beginning his stud career in Florida, and succumbed to laminitis in 1990. The newest members are sire City Zip and broodmare Private Status, the dam of Kentucky Oaks winner Secret Status, who both died in 2017.

As much as the graveyard is a tribute to the horses within it, the plot of land is a salute to symmetry and serenity. With the brick entryway under one's feet, the graveyard consists of three curved rows, with 13 foundation broodmares on the left and 15 stallions on the right, with a grass walkway down the middle.

Pedigrees crisscross the aisle and loop around the swaying Japanese Zelkova trees. Weekend Surprise, one of the breed's greatest blue hen mares, rests just a few steps away from her Preakness Stakes-winning son Summer Squall. Both were born at Lane's End and spent their reproductive careers there before ultimately sharing a resting place.

The rows are separated by gender, but blood stays close in the Lane's End graveyard. Weekend Surprise is buried next to her dam, the cornerstone broodmare Lassie Dear. To the left of Lassie Dear is another of her daughters, Charming Lassie, who produced the champion and pensioned Lane's End sire Lemon Drop Kid. Dixieland Band, one of the three original mem-



STALLIONS BURIED AT THE LANE'S END CEMETERY

bers of the Lane's End stallion roster, resides next to his son Dixie Union.

No matter what a horse achieves to merit a place in the graveyard, their monument is the same as the horse next to them. Each horse gets a limestone marker signifying their name, sire and dam, and their year of birth and death. The stones are made by Clark Monuments in nearby Versailles.

Tradition has often seen a horse's head, heart, and hooves interred in their final resting place, while the best of the best are buried whole. Lane's End chooses cremation for its graveyard roster, both for a simple interment, and to ensure that every property that was touched by a great horse has a chance to properly memorialize them.

"We like cremation, because it's a way to share the ashes," Farish Day said. "These horses impacted a lot of people before they got to Lane's End, so we can share the ashes with them. Gulch has a portion of his ashes buried at Old Friends."

For all the prominent names tied to the Lane's End legacy who reside in the graveyard, there is one name whose absence from the enclosure is impossible to ignore.

A.P. Indy, perhaps the farm's greatest son, did not get a headstone in the

Lane's End graveyard following his death in 2020. Instead, his limestone marker was placed in front of the life-sized bronze statue of the 1992 Horse of the Year that oversees the courtyard between the stud barns.

For a horse that did so much to advance Lane's End on the racetrack and in the breeding shed, Farish Day said it was only fitting.

"A.P. Indy was just so important to the farm, and we'd already had the statue made long before he passed away, so it just made sense to bury him at that center spot in the stallion complex," she said.

The graveyard is a place for reflection and remembrance, but it's also a link between Lane's End's past, present and future. From the graveyard, one can see the paddocks of active stallions including Honor Code, The Factor, Accelerate, and Game Winner.

Even as a natural bubble from the world of the living that surrounds it, the reminders of what the graveyard's residents built are made clear in the senses one experiences inside of that bubble. Each sense is felt in that particular spot because the horses buried there made it so.

It's just some landscaped headstones, but it's also so much more.



THE CEMETERY AT LANE'S END FARM

Filling the Gaps

Alys Emson's Multi-Faceted Career at Lane's End

BY MELISSA BAUER-HERZOG

Stallion Manager Peter Sheehan calls her “the glue that holds everything together.” It’s a fitting way to describe Alys Emson, who’s done a little bit of everything during her 23 years at Lane’s End.

“My job has sort of morphed into what has been needed—I feel like I have just filled the gaps along the way,” Emson said. “Ultimately, I keep our clients up-to-date with evaluations and updates on their yearlings and foals.”

Her rise to the client management position hasn’t been a straight path through the Lane’s End ranks, with Emson having left the farm for a few years before her return in 2003.

Emson caught the horse bug early on, with both her grandmothers fostering her love of racing. She joined the industry as a teenager while attending a boarding school in England and made her way to Newmarket as soon as she graduated. That turned into a trip to work in France at Haras Du Quesnay for six months before she traveled to Kentucky in 1994.

“I am a military child, and my parents were overseas a lot,” she said. “Although I went to boarding school at the age of nine, travel was very normal to me from an early age. I wanted to gain experience in other countries and see more of the world.”

That led Emson to working for four years at Lane’s End, where she gained experience in various areas of the operation, including two seasons working with the stallions. She also joined Neil Howard’s team at the track for a winter before returning to England.

After her stint as an assistant stud groom at renowned breeder Gerald Leigh’s Eydon Hall, Emson decided the U.S. was where she wanted to continue her career, and she made her return to Kentucky. She worked at Crestwood Farm for three years before she made it back to Lane’s End in 2003. She’s been there ever since.

A regular sight around all divisions of Lane’s End, Emson plays a large part both in the farm’s social media presence and keeping clients updated on their horses.

“All our clients have webpages on their horses, so I make sure they have all the information and media they need,” she explained. “We live in an age that is far more visual than it was 20 years ago. I try and keep our clients supplied with plenty of photos and videos so they feel more connected.”

During foaling season, Emson starts her day at 6:30 a.m. with a visit to the foaling barn to check on any new arrivals. Her schedule will then vary—some days she may be showing clients around the farm and others she may be inspecting horses or sending updates. It isn’t unusual to see her out in the fields taking photos, capturing videos, or even flying a drone to create content for clients and social media followers alike.

“I spend quite a bit of time out in the foal paddocks and fields taking photos and videos and making notes,” Emson said. “I also do a lot of the social media which appeals to my creative side, so I try to make it as fun as possible but also educational to the fans.”

Emson is also heavily immersed in Lane’s End sales. One of her duties throughout the year is conducting yearling inspections and sales placement as part of the sales team, so she is intimately familiar with the Lane’s End horses going through the ring.



LANE’S END FARM’S ALYS EMSON

After 23 years at Lane’s End, Emson said she can’t name a favorite part of her job, but that there is something she looks forward to every day when driving through the gates.

“Just coming to work every day at a beautiful farm like this is a privilege, especially given what is going on in the world today,” she said. “I’m a morning person, so driving in at 6:30 a.m. and seeing the sunrise is probably my favorite part of the day.”

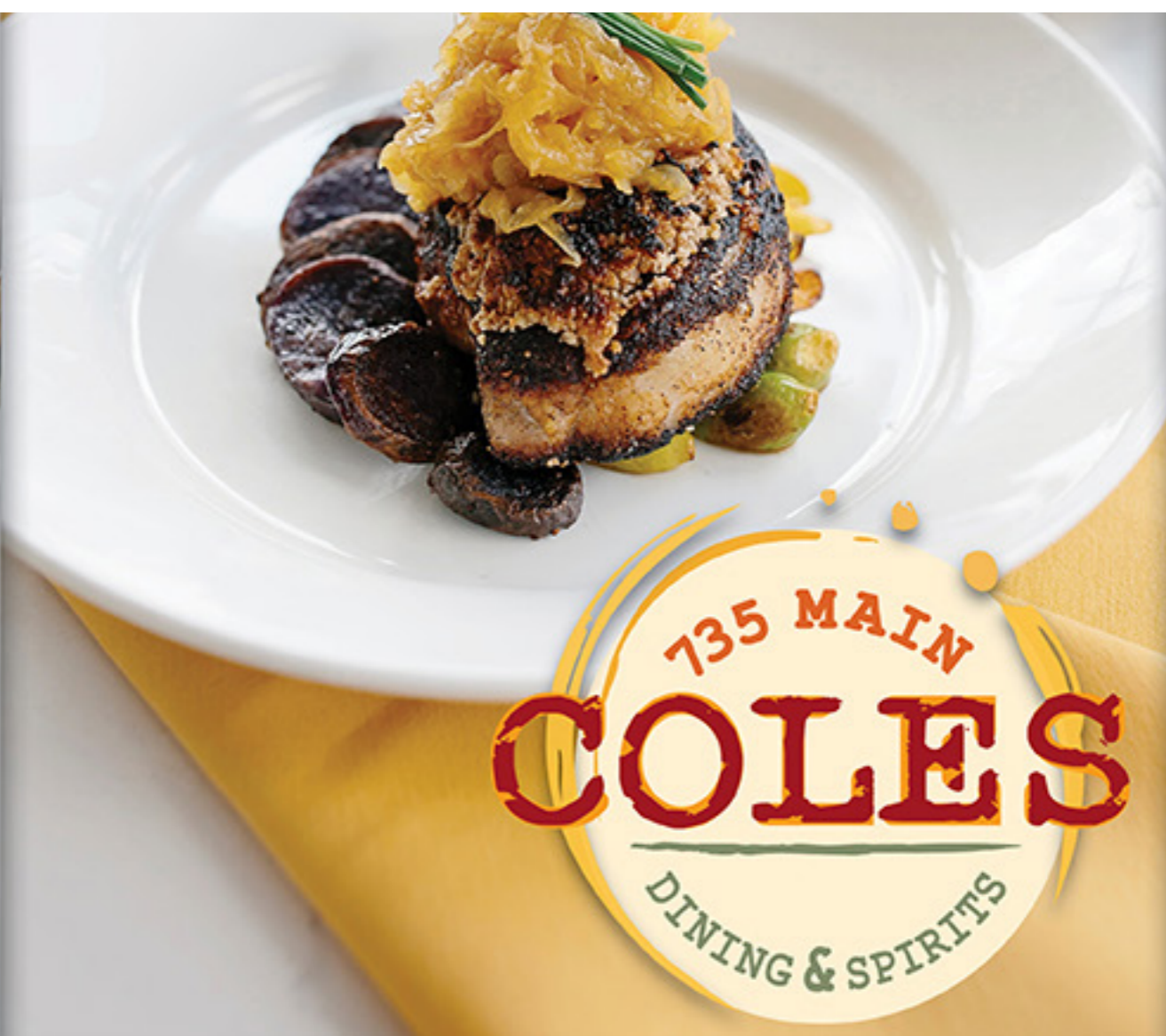
As for her favorite memory at Lane’s End, she said she can’t pick between the equine ones—but one human meeting comes straight to mind.

“There are so many big horse moments, so picking a couple is hard after such a lengthy tenure,” Emson said. “But I think in terms of a non-horsey

big moment, meeting the Queen was huge. I also met the senior President Bush. It’s an amazing business—you really get to meet some extraordinary people from all walks of life.”

For those who want to work in the industry, Emson notes that you need to be passionate about the horses.

“It is long hours and can be really tough, but it is also incredibly rewarding,” she said. “Be observant—paying attention to the horses and their wants and needs is really important. We are here to basically keep them happy and healthy. Regardless of what role you ultimately want to fill in this business, try and work in every sphere. You will have a better understanding and overall picture if you’ve spent time on the farm, at the sales and in racing.”



THE FUTURE OF HISA, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Anti-Doping and Medication Control Delayed to 2023

The most anticipated pieces of HISA – the anti-doping and medication control programs – have officially been postponed until early 2023. Post-race testing under the Authority was the first element to be delayed, due to the logistical challenges in implementing the new standards in numerous, vastly different jurisdictions on a tight timeline. A few weeks later, in late December, out-of-competition testing and investigative work also were pushed to 2023 due to negotiations deteriorating between HISA and the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency, which had been expected to serve as the independent enforcement agency overseeing medication.

The Authority has said it will find another agency to fill that role, though options are limited. The World Anti-Doping Agency, initiated more than

20 years ago by the International Olympic Committee, the U.S. Equestrian Federation, and Fédération Equestre Internationale, which handles anti-doping in dressage, have been mentioned as possibilities.

New Leader for the Authority

HISA is facing these challenges under the leadership of a new CEO, Lisa Lazarus, who took over in February. Lazarus established and led the equestrian practice at Morgan Sports Law. She also served as general counsel and later head of business development and strategy at the Fédération Equestre Internationale, the international governing body for equestrian sports. Prior to that she spent a decade at the NFL in multiple roles, including representing the league in arbitration matters related to anti-doping enforcement.

“As someone who has worked with the industry over the course of my

career, and as a horse lover, I’m honored to be taking on this role,” said Lazarus.

How Lazarus fends off the lawsuits challenging HISA’s constitutionality will determine nothing less than whether the Authority exists a few years from now. Horse racing in the U.S. has never been so close to widescale reform, yet still has a few hurdles to clear for it to be fully realized.



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HISTORY
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TRADITION
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FLAVOR

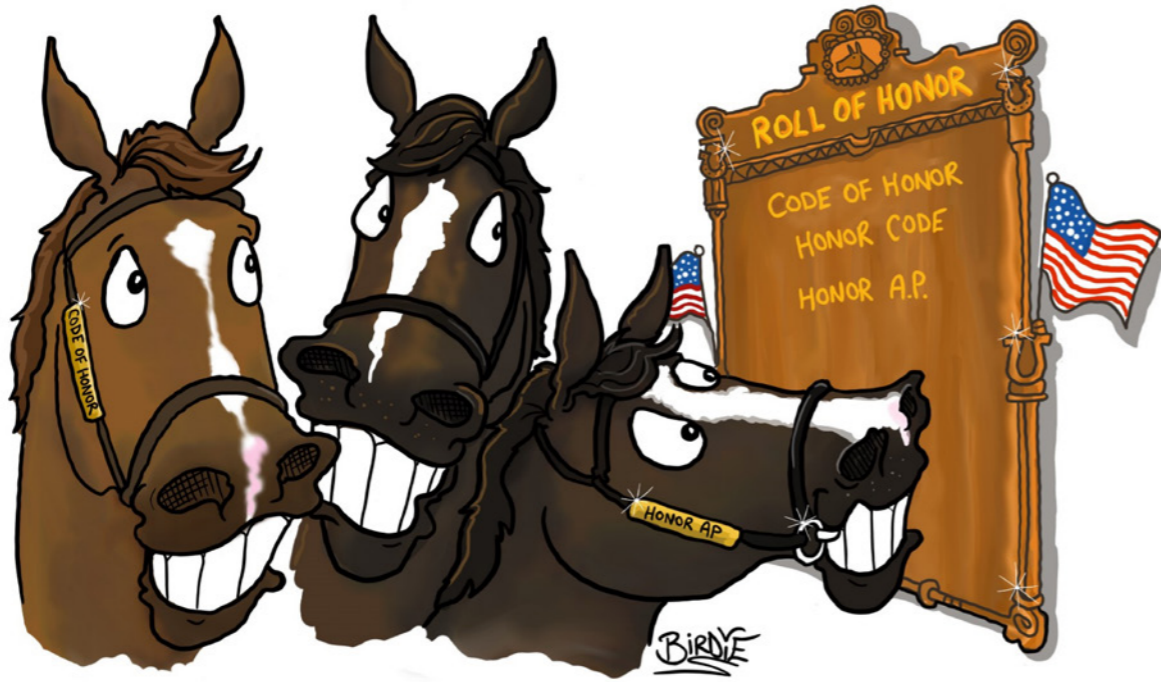
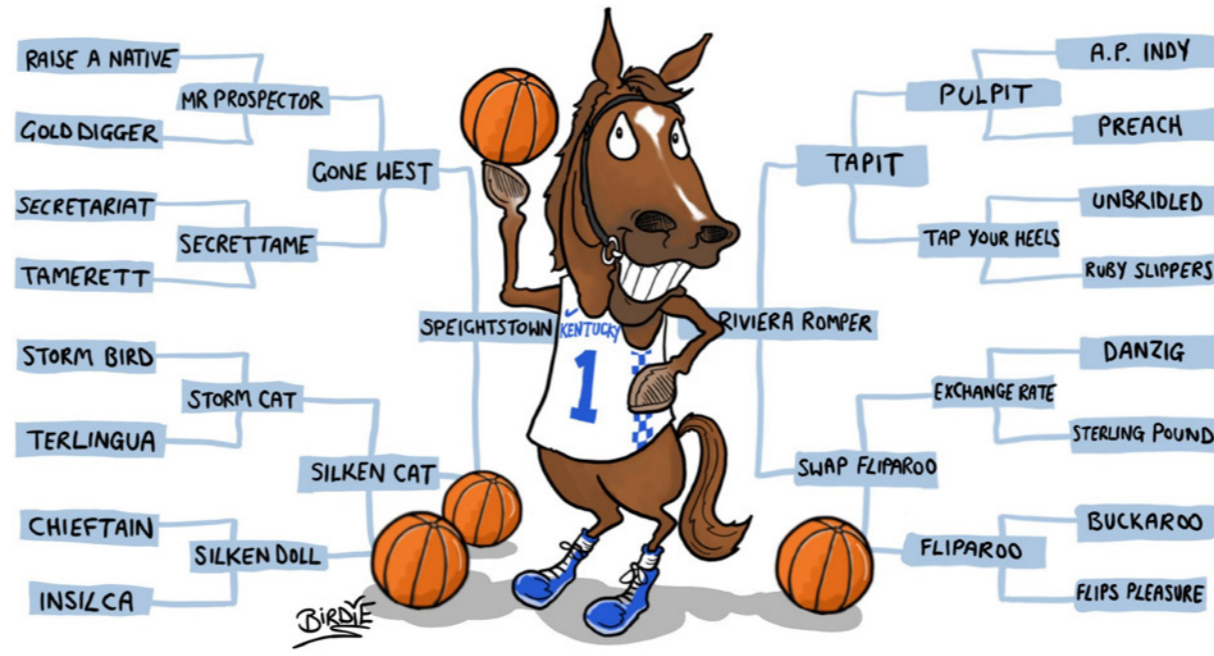


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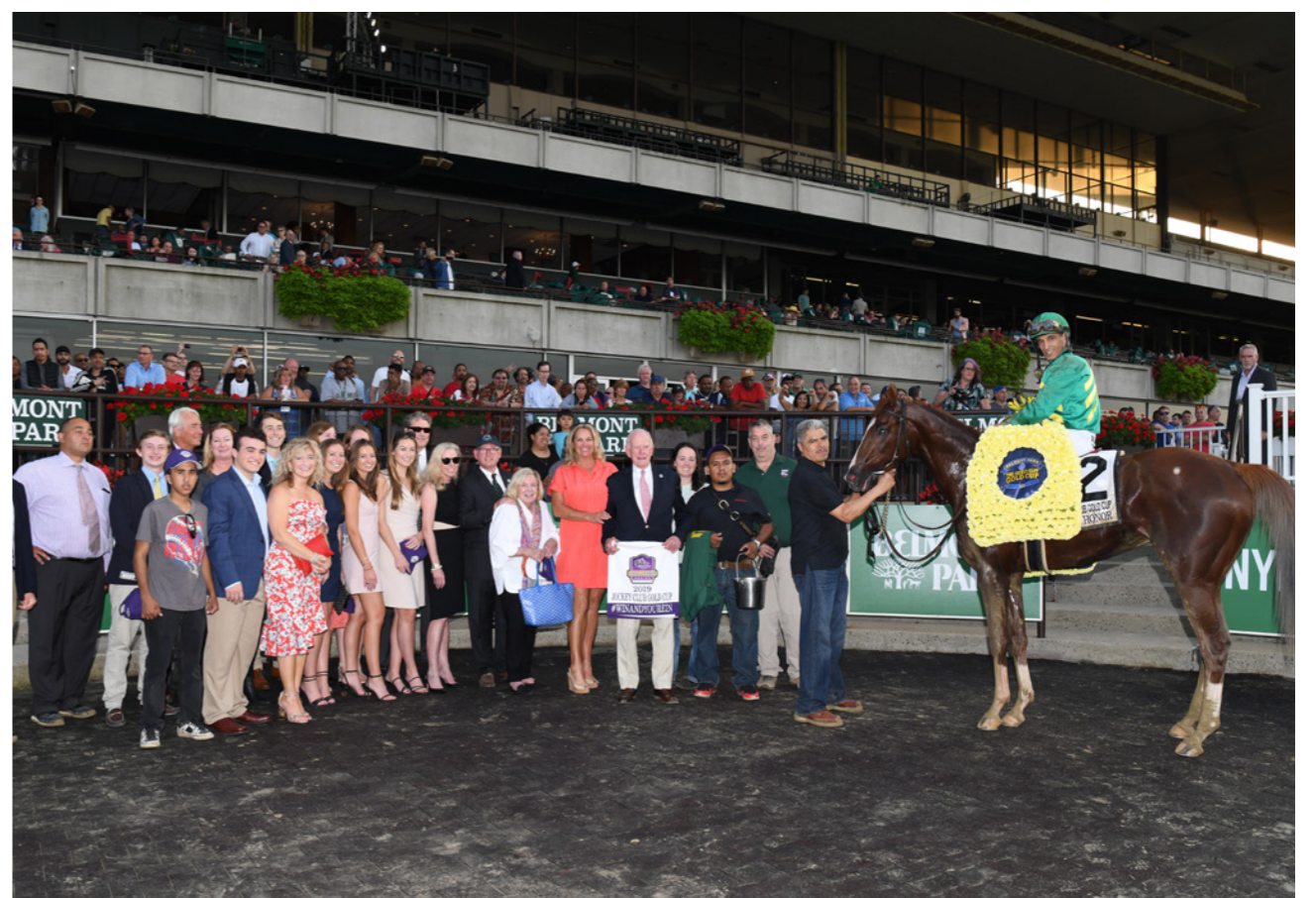
A.P. INDY, 1992 BELMONT S. (G1)



ROYAL FLAG WINNING THE 2021 BELDAME S. (G2)



FLAGSTAFF (SECOND FROM RIGHT) WINNING THE 2021 CHURCHILL DOWNS S. (G1)



CODE OF HONOR, 2019 JOCKEY CLUB GOLD CUP S. (G1)