

In The Arsenal coming in hot to North America Cup elims

by Hannah Beckett, for WEG Communications

Campbellville, ON --- As bidding stalled at \$7,000 on one of White Birch Farm's yearlings at the Standardbred Horse Sale in 2013, farm manager Steve Williams felt compelled to act. Choosing to buy the colt back for \$7,500, he soon proved to be the ultimate bargain.

Making his first start on Canadian soil in the second C\$50,000 North America Cup elimination on Saturday night (June 13), In The Arsenal will be looking to extend his sophomore win streak after going three-for-three to start his campaign.

In his first start of 2015, the [American Ideal](#) colt captured a New York Sires Stakes event in a tidy 1:50 before finishing on top in both his Art Rooney elimination and the \$300,000 final. Choosing to forego the [Somebeachsomewhere](#) at Mohawk Racetrack on June 6, trainer Kelvin Harrison believes he is good and fresh going into the eliminations.

"He's a little more mature as a 3-year-old," said Harrison. "He didn't grow much but he is a lot smarter than he was last year.

"I didn't feel it was necessary to send him to the 'Somebeach.' He raced three weeks in a row and I wanted him to get some rest before the North America Cup."

In The Arsenal's freshman campaign saw a 6-1-1 record in 11 starts, banking just shy of \$400,000. Owned by White Birch Farm and In The Arsenal Racing, he took a mark of 1:49.4 in Lexington in September before rounding out the season with an impressive performance in the Breeders Crown final, finishing second by a head to Traceur Hanover.

Though he picked up the lion's share of the purse in the Art Rooney final on May 30, a slight bobble at the wire gave fans pause and nearly cost him the race. Fortunately, Harrison believes this was nothing to show concern over.



Mike Lizzi photo

In The Arsenal has banked \$581,843 in his career with nine wins in 14 lifetime starts.

"It was the finish lights at Yonkers. There was a little bit of sunlight peaking over the building and he ducked a little sideways. He made it look worse than it actually was."

The 14th foal out of Ladyotra headed north Wednesday morning with Harrison following suit on Thursday. Brian Sears is confirmed to drive, after establishing a successful partnership with the colt in his last nine starts.

"He's going to be stabled at (Richard) 'Nifty' Norman's place. Hopefully we'll be there after the eliminations and for the final," said Harrison.

In The Arsenal's first start in Canada will bring Harrison back to Mohawk after a seven-year hiatus. His last start here came in the Breeders Crown Open

Mare Pace where his trainee Free held off a hard-closing Invitro to finish third. He will be looking for repeat success, with a finish in the top three guaranteeing a coveted spot in the C\$1 million Pepsi North America Cup final on June 20.

"He was very good coming out of the Rooney," said Harrison. "He's obviously as good as anything I've ever had; he's a real tough horse."

Harrison has seen his fair share of success, with \$12.4 million in purses collected over the years and he is hopeful In The Arsenal will do his part in helping him surpass the 1,000 win milestone.

The 3-year-old will start from post position seven and is one of only two horses in his elimination field to bypass the [Somebeachsomewhere](#). He will face off against division winner Dudes The Man, who won handily in his 'Beach' division for Corey Callahan in 1:50.3, to his outside in post position eight.

The field also includes Bob McIntosh trainee Go Daddy Go, who rallied to finish a strong second in his division after starting from the ten hole. Pennsylvania invader Allbeef N Nobull and The Wayfaring Man are likely to find themselves in the mix as well, posing a challenge for Harrison's trainee.

"It's a talented field," said Harrison. "They wouldn't be there if they weren't. It comes down to a little luck and a big effort.

"It's like I always say 'it's not where you start, it's where you finish.'"

In The Arsenal is staked to the majority of major stakes event throughout the rest of the season, with the Meadowlands Pace and the Little Brown Jug on Harrison's radar.

A total of 24 horses will start in three North America Cup eliminations Saturday (June 13) at Mohawk in search of a spot in the \$1 million final the following week. The first race goes to post at 7:25 p.m.