

\$900,000 NYSS Night of Champions encore: The 2-year-olds

By Tim Bojarski for the Harness Horse Breeders of New York State

Latham, NY---Two weeks after the sophomore class toured the hilltop course at Yonkers Raceway, four divisions of the best 2-year-olds in the state will compete for top honors and \$225,000 per split during the New York Sire Stakes (NYSS) Night of Champions on Saturday night (Sept. 26).

The 2-year-old trotting colts and geldings kick off the night and Dayson puts his undefeated record on the line against seven competitors.

Dayson (Conway Hall-Nervey's Taurus) has gone seven-for-seven this year and has achieved those wins in a variety of racing styles. Front end, off the pace, middle of the pack; it hasn't made much difference to this most dominant of trotters. He just wins.

The gelding comes into this race after taking a new lifetime mark of 1:55.2 at Vernon Downs in the final regular NYSS event of the year. His carded earnings of \$182,612 make him the fifth richest horse of his sex and gait in North America going into this final.

His trainer Howard Okusko is having one of the best years of his long and successful career and he retains the services of Jeff Gregory once again for this event. Dayson is the prohibitive 7-5 morning line favorite in this race.

In the distaff trot, the 2-year-old fillies' event looks to be a wide-open affair with four horses closely rated.

The Ron Burke Stable entry of Dizzy Broad and Goosebump Hanover are listed as the 9-5 handicapper's choice and their recent records indicate why.

Dizzy Broad (Broad Bahn-Portia) comes into this event on a three-race win streak that includes a lifetime mark of 1:56.4 at Tioga Downs in her last start. She has five wins in seven starts this year and is the highest money earner of this group.

Dizzy Broad likes the front and recent decent posts have helped that penchant. However this week she will leave from post eight for driver Matt Kakaley.

Goosebump Hanover (RC Royalty-Good Common Cents) has three wins and two seconds in her last five starts and she too just recently set her lifetime mark of 1:57.2 at Saratoga Raceway on September 2. She is six of eight, first or second this year, all in NYSS competition and that puts her second in earnings in this race behind her stablemate.

Goosebump Hanover likes to leave as well doing so from post two tonight will suit her and her driver Jim Morrill Jr., very well.

Non Stick (Lucky Chucky-Meucci Madness) is a perfect five-for-five in her very short season. Trainer Ake Svanstedt didn't start this filly until July 22 but his patience paid off. She had 18 days off between her last two starts but that didn't seem to impact her performance last week.

Rated as the second choice at 5-2, Non Stick comes into this race off another 17 days break and a switch back to Daniel Dube at the lines.

Posterity (Lucky Chucky-Vintage Chip) is another force to be reckoned with and is 3-1 morning line. She has five wins and two seconds in seven starts this year and has won four of those in very convincing fashion. She has the ability to race up front or off the pace and trainer/driver Charlie Norris can make up his mind behind the gate as he starts from the middle of the pack in post four.

The 2-year-old pacing fillies should be another epic battle as three of them enter on very even ground.

Soft Idea (American Ideal-Walk Softly) has been red-hot since July, winning five out of six including her last three in a row. In those races she took a lifetime mark of 1:53.4 at Vernon Downs, matched it the following week at Yonkers Raceway and then broke it the week after at Tioga Downs going in 1:53.3.

Her annual earnings of \$144,407 puts her seventh in North America among all fillies of her gait and the \$128,462 of that earned in NYSS action helped her become the top point getter in that series as well.

Regular driver and leading NYSS reinsman Jim Morrill Jr. will be in tow when Soft Idea leaves from post six for trainer Linda Toscano. She is listed as 3-1 morning line.

Time On My Hands (American Ideal-Bewitching Jewell) is another filly on the fly. She has four wins and two seconds in her last six starts. In her last outing at Batavia Downs, she was parked three-wide in a back half of :28.4 and :28 before hanging on to be a solid second in track record time.

Installed as the handicappers choice at 2-1, Time On My Hands gets some post relief after two outside draws and will depart from the pylons. Trainer Chris Ryder has Jason Bartlett up for the first time in this event.

Dime A Dance (Roll With Joe-Hat Dance Hanover) has been absolutely lethal since August 21. She took a lifetime mark of 1:52.2 at Vernon Downs that night before coming right back at Yonkers in 1:55.4. But it's her last outing at Batavia Downs that really wowed those who saw it.

After sitting fourth to a :56 half, Dime A Dance swung three-deep at three-quarters and separated herself from the pack, winning in 1:52.4 by three-lengths over the half-mile oval while setting a new track record for sex and gait. In her last three starts she has charted final quarters of :26.3, :26.4 and :27.4.

Dime A Dance leaves from post seven (as a betting entry with Mother Of Art) for trainer Ron Burke, but coming off the pace suits her well. Matt Kakaley will be onboard again to try to extend their win streak.

The fourth event will be a heavyweight match between the 2-year-old pacing colts and geldings; not only the best in state, but also ranked high in North America.

The undefeated National seasons' record holder, Travel Playlist (Art Major-Village Madonna), puts his fine body of work on the line. After winning his first two starts of the year, Travel Playlist was off sick for 21 days before returning to action on August 20. That night at Yonkers he toyed with the field, winning by five in 1:54.3.

The following week at Vernon Downs, he won in 1:49.2 (back half in :53.2) which made him the fastest 2-year-old pacing colt in North America for 2015. He also rewrote the Vernon track record for sex and gait that night.

After another 19 day break, trainer Erv Miller has Travel Playlist back in action with Marcus Miller aboard for the second consecutive start. He is listed at 9-5 by the track handicapper.

Trainer Mark Harder brings a solid one-two punch to post with the entry of Joe Larry N Curly and Autotune Hanover that are rated the 4-5 morning line favorites.

Joe Larry N Curly (Roll With Joe-Life's Image) is seven of eight, first or second in 2015 with \$171,781 on the card. That puts him tenth in North America for earnings for his sex and gait. That entire total was earned in the NYSS and thus made him the top point earner for that division.

He comes into this race off a lifetime best 1:53.1 at Saratoga Raceway and draws post four for Jim Morrill Jr., who drove him in that effort.

Autotune Hanover (Art Major-Anderosa Hanover) has had a tale of two seasons. He started off strong with two wins in a row, including a victory in the \$107,500 Sheppard at Yonkers before making a break and drawing post seven and a slow half his next two outings. But he rebounded well with two more wins, including his career best 1:51.2 at Vernon Downs on September 7. That was the sixth fastest time for his sex and gait in North America this year.

His \$170,480 earned puts him eleventh in earnings in North America for his category, right behind his stablemate. Autotune Hanover's regular driver, Tyler Buter, will team the colt once again and leave from post eight.