



# VERNON DOWNS

## 2022 Media Guide

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**WIN A LOT**



VERNON DOWNS  
RACING

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# ABOUT VERNON DOWNS

Nestled in the beautiful rolling hills of central New York, Vernon Downs offers a long-running history of fast paced harness racing. From April to November, you can listen to the beat of the horses, featuring some of the finest races in the area. In recent years, Vernon Downs has seen a renaissance, with top trotters making a stop in central New York to contest the Zweig Memorial in the summer. Additionally, top New York-sired horses take part in a full slate of New York Sire Stakes and Empire Breeders Classic events. Combine that with a casino, daily simulcasting of races throughout North America, promotions, good food, live entertainment, and an all-suite hotel, Vernon Downs is a great place to have fun at an affordable price.

## Vernon Downs Quick Facts

Track circumference: 7/8 mile • Stretch length: 900'  
First-row starters: 9  
Open stretch: NoTakeout rates: Win, place, and show: 18%.  
Exacta and double: 20%. All others: 25%.

## Casino Quick Facts

Slots: 512  
Denominations: From 1¢ to \$5.00 • Minimum Age to Play: 18



**VERNON DOWNS**  
RACING





# 2022 LIVE HARNESS RACING

## APRIL

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## MAY

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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## JUNE

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

## JULY

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30

## AUGUST

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

## SEPTEMBER

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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

## OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23/30	24/31	25	26	27	28	29

## NOVEMBER

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			



POST TIMES 6:05PM 12:15PM 5:05PM



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**VERNON DOWNS**  
RACING



# TRACK HISTORY

**July 1, 1953:** Vernon Downs opens its doors for the first time to a crowd of 4,632 racegoers. Bob Abbe II wins the first race over the Central New York racecourse, covering 6-1/2 furlongs in 1:44.1. A total of \$114,777 is wagered on the first of 67 programs contested through the inaugural season.

**1955:** The three-quarter mile track is dubbed "The Home of the Miracle Mile" after Adios Harry paced one mile in 1:55, a world race record which held up for 15 years.

**1964:** Legendary racecaller Jim Moran debuts at Vernon, sharing duties with announcer Bud Hebert before embarking on a half-century career as the voice of harness racing in central New York.

**1965:** Bret Hanover attracts a crowd of 14,169 to the Miracle Mile for the season's featured three-year-old pacing event.

**1966:** Bret Hanover again makes Vernon Downs history, establishing a 1:54 world record in a time trial. The grandstand is enclosed with large sliding windows, affording racegoers protection from inclement conditions while still allowing for open-air atmosphere on warm summer nights.

**1971:** The downstairs clubhouse restaurant is now air conditioned, and the track is rated the second fastest in America by the United States Trotting Association.

**1972:** The upper-level clubhouse restaurant is renamed the Gold Cup Room from the Mohawk Terrace, while the downstairs section becomes the Miracle Mile Room after two decades as the Turfside Terrace.

**1973:** AmTote installs a computerized pari-mutuel system, and 61 television monitors are installed throughout the facility.

**1974:** Instant replay of races is offered for the first time.

**1980:** Niatross, who was based at Vernon in a 13-for-13 freshman season, returns to Vernon with driver Clint Galbraith after their Meadowlands Pace triumph to capture the Gaines Stakes in 1:53.3, a new track record. A new lighting system is installed around the track.

**1984:** Sunday racing is welcomed to Vernon Downs.

**1985:** Prakas sets the trotting record at Vernon with a 1:56 mile in the Founders Gold Cup for three-year-olds.

**1988:** Call For Rain establishes a new speed mark at Vernon with a 1:52.3 mile on August 20. Vernon Downs Hi

**1989:** Dexter Nukes equals Call For Rain's mark of 1:52.3 in the Gaines Stakes.

**1991:** The inside hub rail is removed and replaced with pegs marking the inside of the track. May concert series begins.

**1992:** Stylish Cam takes another second off the track record with a 1:51.3 performance in the North American Pacing Series.

**1994:** Canaco On Time turns in a 1:51.1 mile on the pace. The Vernon Downs Hotel, located at the top of the present-day homestretch, opens in November as the Vernon Comfort Suites.

**1995:** Deliberate Speed's 1:55 Founders Stakes win establishes a new trotting track record.

**1996:** Oye Vay's 1:50.3 Gaines Stakes victory is the fastest mile in four decades of racing at Vernon. Both three-year-old trotting divisions of the Breeders Crown are held at Vernon, with Personal Banner (1:54.1) and Running Sea (1:55) winning the filly and colt divisions, respectively.

**2000:** After 47 years of the unique six-furlong track configuration replete with a chute for starting one-mile races in the homestretch, a new 7/8-mile oval is unveiled on July 1.

**2004:** Vernon Downs closes its doors in July.

# TRACK HISTORY

**2006:** New York real-estate mogul and harness racing enthusiast Jeff Gural purchases Vernon Downs out of bankruptcy. Bob's Ring Of Fire and Chuck Connor Jr. win the first race of the abbreviated 30-day meet. Easton Alliance N and Cat Manzi won the \$83,500 Artiscap for distaff pacers in 1:51.

**2007:** The Credit Winner free-for-all trot debuts at Vernon Downs. Vivid Photo and Roger Hammer take the lion's share of the \$154,000 purse with a 1:52.1 victory in the first of ten renewals of the event, which later would be named the Crawford Farms Trot and would move to sister track Tioga Downs in 2017.

**2013:** Intimidate and Ron Pierce establish the all-age trotting record at Vernon with a 1:51 win in the Credit Winner.

**2014:** After 50 years behind the microphone, Jim Moran calls his final race at Vernon Downs.

**2015:** Speedy local mainstays Fireyourguns and JK Panache both record 1:47.3 miles at Vernon to jointly hold the all-age track pacing record.

**2018:** The one and only Atlanta 3 year old trotting queen out of Chapter Seven sets a new track record in her EBC finals score here at Vernon of 1:50.3 on May 28th 2018.

**2021:** Cattlewash out of the Ron Burke barn goes wire to wire in a short field of 5 to break the track record for 4 year old pacers in a time of 1:49.0 flat.

## Zweig

Top 3-year-old trotters are featured annually at Vernon Downs in the Harold M. Zweig Memorial, which features separate open and filly divisions.

## 2021 Zweig Memorial Recap

Vernon Downs press release By John Horne

Ready For Moni shines bright in Zweig at Vernon Downs.



Spy Booth (Dexter Dunn) rallies to capture the \$325,000 Zweig Open Trot.



Ambassador Hanover (Ake Svanstedt) charged right to the front. The big favorite **Dancinginthedark M** went on a break at the start of the race. **Ambassador Hanover** went to the quarter first in :27.0. **Balenciaga (Scott Zeron)** made a first over-move and challenged down the backstretch. Ambassador Hanover had a short lead to the half in :56.3. Balenciaga battled Ambassador Hanover all the way around the final turn. Balenciaga took control and led to three-quarters in 1:24.1.

As they made the turn for home **Spy Booth** (\$21,60) came flying down the stretch and took over the lead and braced for a late move by Take All Comers (David Miller). Spy Booth held on to win his first career race in 1:52.3. It was the first time the Zweig was won by a maiden. **Take All Comers** was second but placed fifth for interference in the stretch. Balenciaga was awarded second with **Zenith Stride** (Andrew McCarthy) getting third money. Spy Booth is a 3-year-old gelding by Muscle Hill. He is trained by Nancy Takter for owners John Fielding, David Anderson, Robert LeBlanc, and Marvin Katz. It was his first career victory.

### Open Division

Year	Top Three Finishers	Driver	Trainer	Time
2021	Spy Booth Balenciaga Zenith Stride	Dexter Dunn Scott Zeron Andrew Mccarthy	Nancy Takter Paul Kelly Mark Harder	1:52.3
2020	Ready For Moni Back Of The Neck King Alphonso	Matt Kakaley Scott Zeron Dexter Dunn	Nancy Takter Ake Svanstedt Ake Svanstedt	1:51.1
2019	Greenshoe Green Manalishi S Mariseille	Brian Sears Tim Tetrick Ake Svanstedt	Marcus Melander Marcus Melander Ake Svanstedt	1:52
2018	Met's Hall Manchego (f) Six Pack	Andy Miller Yannick Gingras Ake Svanstedt	Jimmy Takter Ake Svanstedt Ake Svanstedt	1:52
2017	Yes Mickey Ariana G (f) Devious Man	Ake Svanstedt Yannick Gingras Andy Miller	Jimmy Takter Julie Miller Jimmy Takter	1:51.2
2016	Bar Hopping Milligan's School Love Matters Hititoutofthepark	Tim Tetrick Andy Miller Brett Miller Corey Callahan	Jimmy Takter Julie Miller Jimmy Takter John Butenschoen	1:53.1
2015	Pinkman Canepa Hanover Workout Wonder	Yannick Gingras Jimmy Takter Daniel Dube	Jimmy Takter Jimmy Takter Ake Svanstedt	1:52

# FILLY DIVISION

**Darlene Hanover** wins the \$140,000 Zweig Memorial Filly Trot.



**Contested Hanover** (Tim Tetrick), **Splash Blue Chip** (Ake Svanstedt), and **Iteration** (Brian Sears) all left for the lead and were three across the track as they headed for the first turn.

**Iteration** wrestled the lead away and led to the first quarter in :27.1. **Iteration** used a :30.3 second quarter to hit the half in :57.4. **Darlene Hanover** made her move first-over going around the far turn.

**Iteration** still led to three-quarters in 1:26.4.

As they reached the stretch Darlene Hanover blew right on by and breezed home to win easily in 1:53.4.

**Aunt Irene** (Dexter Dunn) came closing late to finish second. **Contested Hanover** was third.

**Darlene Hanover** is a filly by Chapter Seven. She is owned by Yankeeland partners and trained by Brett Bittle.

It was her third win of the season and seventh career victory.



### Filly Division

Year	Top Three Finishers	Driver	Trainer	Time
2021	Darlene Hanover Aunt Irene Contested Hanover	Todd McCarthy Dexter Dunn Tim Tetrick	Brett Bittle Nancy Takter George Ducharme	1:53.4
2020	Ramona Hill Hypnotic AM Tricky Sister	Andrew McCarthy Brian Sears Jason Bartlett	Tony Alagna Marcus Melander Andrew Harris	1:52.0
2019	The Ice Dutchess Evident Beauty Starita	Yannick Gingras David Miller Dexter Dunn	Nancy Johansson Richard Norman Joe Halloway	1:52.4
2018	Supergirl Riley Plunge Blue Chip Perfect Summer K	Marcus Miller Ake Svanstedt David Miller	Erv Miller Ake Svanstedt Andrew Harris	1:54.3
2017	Evelyn Sunshine Delight Feed Your Head	Andy Miller Brett Miller Yannick Gingras	Ake Svanstedt Staffan Lind Jimmy Takter	1:54.1
2016	Flowers N Songs Womans Will Fad Finance	Yannick Gingras Andy Miller Jim Morrill Jr.	Paul Reid Julie Miller T Smedshammer	1:53.4
2015	Mission Belief Wild Honey Magic Marker	Yannick Gingras John Campbell Brian Sears	Ron Burke Jimmy Takter Richard Norman	1:51.4



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## 2021 Empire Breeders Classic Recap By John Horne for Vernon Downs



Vernon Downs played host to the **Empire Breeders Classic (EBC)** for sophomore trotting colts and geldings as well as two divisions for 3-year-old trotting fillies on Friday (June 18). **Andrew McCarthy** wins two of the three races. McCarthy piloted **Ahundreddollarbill** (\$3.60) to an impressive victory in the \$205,500 EBC for trotting colts and geldings.

**Ambassador Hanover (Ake Svanstedt)** left from his outside post to grab the early lead. His stablemate **Incommunicado (Yannick Gingras)** took over the lead just before hitting the first quarter in :27.0. **Incommunicado** used a :29.4 second quarter to hit the half in :56.4. **Ahundreddollarbill** made his move first-up from third going around the final turn. **Incommunicado** held a narrow lead as he hit three-quarters first in 1:26.0.

As they made the turn for home **Ahundreddollarbill** turned on the after burners as they went down the stretch. **Incommunicado** just couldn't keep up. As they reached mid-stretch it was all **Ahundreddollarbill** as he won easily in 1:53.2. **Ambassador Hanover** came up to finish second best. **Incommunicado** had to settle for third.

**Ahundreddollarbill** is a 3-year-old gelding by Chapter Seven. He is trained by Tony Alagna for owners Crawford Farms Racing and James Crawford IV. The gelding is three for three in 2021. He now has five career wins.



### New York Sired 3YO Trotting Colts and Geldings

Year	Top Three Finishers	Driver	Trainer	Time
2021	Ahundreddollarbill Ambassador Hanover Incommunicado	Andrew McCarthy Ake Svanstedt Yannick Gingras	Tony Alagna Ake Svanstedt Ake Svanstedt	1:53.2
2020	Third Shift Ballcapsnbluejeans Sir Cromwell	Ake Svanstedt Corey Callahan Jason Bartlett	Ake Svanstedt John Butenschoen Edward Hart	1:52.4
2020	Hobbs Take The Credit Barn Holden	Jason Bartlett Ake Svanstedt Jim Morill Jr.	Jim Campbell Ake Svanstedt Steven Pratt	1:53.3
2019	Gimpanzee Mr Vicktor Travel Winner	Brian Sears Tyler Butler Trevor Henry	Marcus Melander George Sholty Richard Norman	1:54
2018	Six Pack Southwind Chrome Olive Bigsby	Ake Svanstedt Scott Zeron Andy McCarthy	Ake Svanstedt Paula Wellwood George Ducharme	1:51.2
2017	Devious Man	Andy Miller	Julie Miller	1:52.2
2016	Dante	Ake Svanstedt	Ake Svanstedt	1:52.3
2015	Crazy Wow	Yannick Gingras	Ron Burke	1:51.1
2014	Expressive Action	Mike Simons	John Grasso	1:54.1
2013	Jurgen Hanover	David Miller	Donna Marshall	1:53.4
2012	Archangel	Jim Morrill Jr.	Peter Arrigenna	1:53.1
2011	Whatever It Takes	Andy Miller	Julie Miller	1:54
2010	Strong Hope	Ron Pierce	Noel Dailey	1:55.2
2009	Russell Hill	Jim Morrill Jr.	Jimmy Takter	1:57.1

## Filly Division



**Iteration (Brian Sears)** is supreme in the \$102,500 first division of the EBC for trotting fillies.

**Contested Hanover (Scott Zeron)** took the lead and led to the first quarter in :27.0. Iteration (\$2.80) made her move popping out of the pocket and getting the lead at the top of the back stretch. She was first to the half in :56.4. She continued to control things by leading to three-quarters in 1:25.0. As they reached the stretch **Contested Hanover** and **Moni For Lindy** (Wally Hennessey) both went all out on the chase but Iteration had plenty in the tank and won in a lifetime best of 1:53.1. Contested Hanover ran a great race to finish second. **Moni For Lindy** got third money.

Iteration is a 3-year-old filly by Chapter Seven. The filly is owned by Courant Inc. and trained by Marcus Melander. She is two for two as a sophomore. She now owns seven career victories. She wins the EBC just like her brother Gimpanzee did a couple years ago at Vernon.

**Darlene Hanover (McCarthy)** holds off late charge by **Sweeping Rainbow (David Miller)** to capture the \$102,500 second division of the EBC for trotting fillies.

**Soukup Blue Chip (Andy Miller)** jumped out to the early lead. Sweeping Rainbow took command and hit the first quarter first in :28.2. Darlene Hanover (\$4.40) made her move down the backstretch going first-over from third and zoomed by to lead to the half in :58.2. She was first to three-quarters in 1:27.2.

As they reached the stretch Sweeping Rainbow popped out of the pocket and the race was on. **Sweeping Rainbow** came charging as **Darlene Hanover** dug down deep and just held on to win in 1:54.3. Sweeping Rainbow settled for second best. Soukup Blue Chip finished third.

**Darlene Hanover** is a 3-year-old filly by Chapter Seven. She is owned by Yankeeland Partners and trained by Brett Bittle. It was her first win in 2021. She now has five career victories.

### New York Sired 3YO Trotting Fillies

Year	Top Three Finishers	Driver	Trainer	Time
2021	Iteration Contested Hanover Moni For Lindy	Brian Sears Scott Zeron Wally Hennessey	Marcus Melander George Ducharme Domenico Cecere	1:53.1
2020	Hypnotic AM Love A Good Story No Mas Drama	Brian Sears Andy Miller Joe Bongiorno	Marcus Melander Julie Miller Jennifer Bongiorno	1:53.4
2019	Quincy Blue Chip Sensibility Sweet Chapter	Jim Morrill Jr. Scott Zeron Matt Kakaley	Gareth Dowse George Ducharme Blake Macintosh	1:55.0
2018	Atlanta Plunge Blue Chip Supergirl Riley	Scott Zeron Ake Svanstedt Marcus Miller	Rick Zeron Ake Svanstedt Erv Miller	1:50.3
2017	Barn Bella	Jeff Gregory	Steven Pratt	1:51.3
2016	Non Stick	Ake Svanstedt	Ake Svanstedt	1:54
2015	Barn Doll	Jeff Gregory	Steven Pratt	1:52.1
2014	Crediana	Tim Tetrick	T. Smedshammer	1:54.1
2013	Lola De Vie	Jim Morrill Jr.	Chris Ryder	1:55.3
2012	For A Dancer	Jeff Gregory	Joe Holloway	1:54
2011	Jezzy	Tim Tetrick	Ray Schnittker	1:55
2010	Southwind Samurai	Patrick Berry	Bjorn Noren	1:54.4
2009	Honorable Daughter	Jim Morrill Jr.	Larry Remmen	1:57



# VERNON DOWNS TRACK RECORDS

## PACING RECORDS:

2C	Travel Playlist	2015	Marcus Miller	1:49.2
2F (t)	See You At Peelers	2010	Marcus Johansson	1:51.3
	Zero Tolerance	2018	David Miller	
2G	Tomy Terror	2014	Corey Callahan	1:50.2
3C	Shake That House	2019	Brian Sears	1:47.4
3F(t)	Major Look	2012	Jeff Gregory	1:50
	Give Me An Amen	2013	Jeff Gregory	
3G	Splash Brother	2020	Tyler Buter	1:49.0
4H	Cattlewash	2021	David Miller	1:49.0
4M	Armbro Dancer	2007	Ron Pierce	1:50.1
4G	JK Panache	2013	Jim Morrill Jr.	1:49.1
AH	He's Gorgeous	2012	Tim Tetrick	1:48.3
AM(t)	My Little Dragon	2008	Brian Sears	1:49.4
	Venus Delight	2015	Jason Bartlett	
AG(t)	<b>Fireyourguns</b>	2015	Jim Morrill Jr.	<b>1:47.3</b>
	<b>JK Panache</b>	2015	Frank Davis	
1/2 mi	Some Or Lis	2013	Joe Nassimos	:53.2
7/8 mi	Noble Wabbit	2013	John MacDonald	1:39

## TROTTING RECORDS:

2C	Crazy Wow	2014	Dan Rawlings	1:54
2F	Atlanta	2017	Mark MacDonald	1:54
2G	Lightning Force	2013	John Campbell	1:55
3C (t)	Crazy Wow	2018	Yannick Gingras	1:51.1
	Ready For Moni	2020	Matt Kakaley	
3F	<b>Atlanta</b>	2018	Scott Zeron	<b>1:50.3</b>
3G	Pinkman	2015	Yannick Gingras	1:52.0
4H	A Penny Earned	2013	Jimmy Whittemore	1:53.1
4M	Hannelore Hanover	2016	Yannick Gingras	1:51.3
4G	Intimidate	2013	Ron Pierce	1:51
AH	Wings Of Royalty	2017	Chris Lems	1:52.4
AM	Maven	2014	Yannick Gingras	1:52
AG	San Pail	2011	Randy Waples	1:51.1
7/8 mi	Mystical Con	2015	Claude Huckabone III	1:43.1
1-3/8 mi	Ivanhoe Diamant	2011	Claude Huckabone III	2:44.2

# HORSEMEN PROFILES

## John MacDonald

Birthday: 28 Jan 1982

Hometown: Charlottetown, PEI



- Cracked the top 5 at Vernon in 2013 after early success in Ottawa, and has been a perennial top local driver since
- Captured both the Vernon training and driving titles in the 2016-2019 seasons (joint driving champion in 2018), (Joint training champion in 2019).

## Jimmy Whittemore

Birthday: 14 Oct 1983

Hometown: Norway, ME



- Earned his 1,000th career driving win in 2014 at Vernon
- Won over 100 races each of the past ten years after moving from his native Maine

## Truman Gale

Birthday: 26 Feb 1989

Hometown: Helena, NY



- Leading provisional driver at Vernon in 2012
- Broke his Meadowlands maiden only his second drive there
- Drove over 100 winners each year from 2013 to 2016

## Jim Morrill Jr.

Birthday: 10 Nov 1964

Hometown: Hamburg, NY



- One of North America's perennial top drivers, with over \$2M in purses earned each year since 2000
- Primarily drives at Pocono and in Western New York after years at The Meadowlands
- One of the most sought-after reinsmen on the New York Sire Stakes circuit
- Won the EBC Final in 2019 with 3 year old trotting filly Quincy Blue Chip

## Leon Bailey

• Birthday 10-23-86,

Hometown-Vernon NY



- 2020 Vernon Downs Driver of the year, Grandson of Jack "The Ripper" Bailey, Son of Driver William Bailey, 3 NYSS county fair finals wins to his credit



# HORSEMEN PROFILES

## Yannick Gingras

Birthday: 4 Aug 1979

Hometown: Sorel, QC



- Has eclipsed \$9M in purse earnings each of the last twelve years, pushing him over \$170M in career purses earned
- Regular driver of Foiled Again, the richest pacer in harness racing history
- Won the Zweig Memorial in 2014 (Father Patrick) and 2015 (Pinkman), as well as the filly division in 2015 (Mission Brief) and 2016 (Flowers N Songs)

## Homer Hochstetler

Birthday: 1 Aug 1952

Hometown: Crete, IL



- Has amassed nearly \$20M in purse earnings and over 1,700 training wins
- Enjoyed six \$1M seasons (2001, 2003-07) while based in Chicago

## Dave Dewhurst

Birthday: 26 Nov 1966

Hometown: New Hartford, NY



- Has earned over \$9M in purses as a trainer, with over 1,900 wins to his credit
- Perennial contender at Vernon has finished in the top 5 locally in seven of the last nine seasons.
- Trained track record holding pacer JK Panache who shares the track record for pacers of 147.3

## George Ducharme

Birthday 25 Dec 1961

Hometown: Norfolk, MA



- Won the 2013 Hambletonian with Vernon-based trotter Royalty For Life
- Amassed over \$1M in purses in both 2013 and 2015 with fewer than 500 combined starts between the two years
- Perennial contender on the New York and Massachusetts Sire Stakes circuits

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