

August 21, 2021 from Meadows Standardbred Owners Association, Pennsylvania Fair Harness Horsemen's Association, and Pennsylvania Harness Horsemen's Association

MEYERSDALE PA – The midweek weather in southwestern Pennsylvania was cruel to two-year-olds racing on the Pennsylvania Fair Circuit, forcing the programs featuring them at the Dayton Fair and the Somerset County Fair in this town near the Maryland border to be cancelled on Wednesday and Thursday, respectively. Fortunately, the three-year-olds were able to get in their races at both locations on their respective next days.

At the Somerset Fair, which rejoined the circuit last year after many years of inactivity, perhaps the most impressive mile came in the very first contest of the meet, when the Southwind Frank gelding Killer Instinct ran his 2021 fair record to 6-4-2-0 with a victory in 2:01.2, missing the divisional track standard set last year by No Name Yankee by only three-fifths of a second. Aaron Johnston guided the sophomore, also one of the best on the circuit last season, to victory for the Brocius Racing Stable Inc. and Lone Wolf Stable, and continued a dream season for trainer Bob Rougeaux III, whose training record is 26-13-10-0-.714.

The other main note of interest here is that in the other three divisions of sophomores, the fastest mile came from the "B" Sire Stakes division rather than the "A" group, including the fastest mile of the meet, a 2:01 mile from the A Rocknroll Dance pacing filly Sassy Sophia, for driver Steve Schoeffel and trainer Rich Gillock, the latter co-owner with Barbara Richardson. The race before, Sassy Sophia's contemporary Ginger Tree Liz won her first fair start of the year, defeating the fastest fair performer of the year on the circuit, Tiamogonedancen, in 2:01.2 for trainer/driver Sam Beegle, also co-owner of the Sweet Lou miss with Ginger Tree Ventures LLC, Double D Racing Stable, and Reber-Chesen Stable.

At Meyersdale, Aaron and Shawn Johnston tied with Tony Schadel with two winners for leading sulkysitter, while Gary Johnston and Linda Schadel both harnessed a pair of winners to tie among the trainers.

There was uniformity in the "A" Sire Stakes three-year-old races at Dayton – the Todd Schadel barn sent out every one of the winners, five in all counting the two divisions of the colt trot. The faster winner in that group, the Bar Hopping colt Top Me Off, continued his torrid form streak, as the 2020 Fair Champion won in 2:01.1 to remain undefeated at the fairs and the first six-time winner on the circuit, with Todd training and driving for himself and his wife Christine and Rick and Regina Beinhauer. The Donato Hanover colt By A Hoff Hanover won the other cut in 2:04 for Todd and Christine, Timothy Hayes, and Dr. Megan Moschgat. And to finish the trotting side, Todd's son Cody drove the Cantab Hall filly Cheesy Hanover to a 2:03.1 victory for his mother and father.

The Artspeak sophomore colt Terry A Hanover, also a 2020 Fair Champion, went in 2:00 for his circuit-leading fourth magic mile for the partnership of Christine Schadel and Caitlin Solt. The filly pace went to the Somebeachsomewhere filly Tonianne, home in 2:01.3 for Andy Miller Stable Inc. and Louis Willinger. With Cody also driving a "B" winner for the barn, Todd led the way at Dayton with four driving wins and six training victories.

Mentioned should be made of Eric Neal, the "hardest-working man" at the fairs, as his total of 97 drives so far is 26 more than anyone else. Eric was also the only driver to drive at both Dayton and Meyersdale (just over 100 miles apart), and won twice at Dayton. Trainers "doing the double" included Eric's father Randal and Lou Goans.

With luck, the two-year-olds will be in action at the Crawford County Fair in Meadville PA on Sunday, with the three-year-olds scheduled for the next day.