

Yonkers Trot, Messenger elims held at Yonkers

by Frank Drucker, publicity director, Empire City at Yonkers Raceway

Yonkers, NY---It was "Elimination Saturday," on Oct. 19, with Yonkers Raceway hosting paring events for three stakes events.

Fifteen 3-year-old colts and geldings turned into eight for Yonkers Trot No. 60, as standouts Nuncio (John Campbell, barred from wagering) and Gural Hanover (Jim Morrill Jr., \$2.30, part of entry) were comfy winners in the pair of \$40,000 elims.



Mayra Escamilla Photos

Nuncio won his Yonkers Trot elimination in 1:56.2.

For Kentucky Futurity champ Nuncio, a millionaire [Andover Hall](#) colt trained by Jimmy Takter for owner Stall TZ, it was his ninth win (third consecutive) in 14 seasonal starts. Note that he and sixth-place finisher Amped Up Hanover (Matt Kakaley) raced for purse only, as the latter, co-owned by Takter's wife, Christina, were not made a parimutuel entry.

"He didn't have to show me anything," Campbell—eying a third Yonkers Trot title--said of Nuncio. "I just took my time with him getting the lead, then I let him do it all by himself."

Gural Hanover, New York Sire Stakes champion and the lone \$30,000 supplemental entrant into this season's Trot, won the draw in the second elim. He retook from a breaking-soon-after Flyhawk El Durado (Mark MacDonald) before finishing his four turns (:28.4, 58.1; 1:27.2; 1:56.3) a length faster than Resolve (Tetrick) in 1:56.3.

Third went to King City (Brennan), with Datsyuk (Charlie Norris) getting the final place at the table.

For Gural Hanover, a [Crazed](#) gelding co-owned (as Burke Racing) by (trainer) Ron Burke, Weaver Brussemi, Little E and Panhellenic Stables, he's now 10-for-14 this season. The exacta paid \$7.10, with the triple returning \$24.40.

The \$40,000 musical chairs elim for the 59th Messenger—nine soph colts/geldings to end up with eight—was won by a pocket-sitting Luck Be Withyou (Tetrick, \$23). From post No. 2, he whipped a cone-skimming Forty Five Red (Brennan) by a neck (:27.2; :57, 1:25, 1:53) with McWicked (Dave Miller) a belated third.



Gural Hanover won his Yonkers Trot elimination on 1:56.3.



All Bets Off (Kakaley), the NYSS champ and strongest third of the 4-5 favored entry, tired noticeably on the lead despite cheap fractions, winding up fourth. Western Conquest (Brent Holland), Lyons somewhere (Brett Miller), National Debt (Campbell) and Stevensville (Ray Schnittker) completing the qualifying octet, while Double Your Bet (Jason Bartlett) was outrun.

Luck Be Withyou (2) won his Messenger Stakes elimination in 1:53.

For fourth choice Luck Be Withyou, a [Western Ideal](#) colt owned by John Craig and trained by Chris Oakes, it was his fifth win in 13 '14 tries. The exacta paid \$41.40, with the triple returning \$84.50.

"I just wanted to be able to be in a position to chase (All Bets Off)," Tetrick said. "He obviously was no good tonight, and we were able to take advantage."

"Flat, very flat," Kakaley said of All Bets Off. "I was cruising at the five-eighths, then in the final turn, I knew I was in trouble. "I don't know if he's sick, but he was not nearly the same horse tonight."

Saturday night's pair of \$20,000 eliminations for the Lady Maud (3-year-old pacing fillies) were won by Fancy Desire (Brennan, \$2.70) in 1:54, and Act Now (Brennan again, \$4.90) in 1:53.1. The other lasses returning for the final are Beautiful Lady, Tyra, Do Your Job, Scandalicious, A La Notte Hanover and Anagada.

Also Saturday, the Raceway honored the recently retired Cat Manzi with a video tribute, a winner's circle presentation and a meet-and-greet autograph photo session with fans.

Next Saturday's (Oct. 25) five stakes finals, the \$500,000 Yonkers Trot, \$500,000 Messenger Stakes, \$250,000 International Trot Preview, \$150,854 Lady Maud and \$124,590 Hudson Filly Trot (no elims-only six entered) shall be "open drawn" Tuesday afternoon.

The Raceway's five-night-per-week live schedule continues, with first post every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7:10 p.m. Evening simulcasting accompanies all live programs, with afternoon simulcasting available daily.