

EBC pacing eliminations at Tioga on Sunday

by Nick Salvi, for Tioga Downs

Nichols, NY --- Five \$12,500 elimination races for the Empire Breeders Classic for 3-year-old pacers will be featured along with New York Sires Stakes for freshman filly trotters as part of an all-stakes 15 race card on Sunday (Aug. 13) at Tioga Downs.

Three divisions of colt and gelding pacers were split into equal fields of seven and will go as races six, seven and eight.

Miso Fast (Matt Kakaley) makes his initial seasonal foray into state-bred competition after facing the top Grand Circuit colts with moderate success thus far in 2017. The [Roll With Joe](#) colt picked up the bulk of his quarter million dollar freshman bankroll in the NYSS program including a second place finish in last year's final.

Miso Fast took a 1:49.2 mark in his Hempt Memorial elim and has fared better in the preliminaries than the big finals this season. He may find Sunday's field more to his liking for the Burke Stable who owns the colt in partnership with Our Horse Cents Stable, J&T Silva and Weaver Brusceci.

Funknwaffles (Corey Callahan) was the NYSS freshman final winner in 2016 and hasn't missed a beat this season in both restricted and open competition. The [American Ideal](#) gelding has absolutely manhandled his New York competition to go along with a third in the Rooney and closing second in the Hempt final against Grand Circuit colts. He's close to a half million in lifetime earnings for owner Crawford Farms Racing and trainer John Butenschoen.

Chief among the colts in the third division is the talented Heaven's Gait (David Miller). Lightly raced at two, this son of [Rock N Roll Heaven](#) is a John Cummins homebred and has enjoyed success on both a state-bred and national level. He has marched through the NYSS legs unblemished and is the author of the fastest mile of the season in the program by virtue of his 1:49 win at Vernon Downs. Heaven's Gait also won the Hempt consolation after narrowly missing a final berth in that stake for trainer Nick DeVita.

The fairer sex entrants numbered 18, which split nicely into a pair of nines.

Race 10 features Clear Idea (Mark MacDonald) who's but a length away from NYSS leg perfection this season, having finished second in the opener. Since then she's had a very "Clear Idea" of how to get to the wire first for trainer Blake MacIntosh who owns the seasonal winner of more than \$180,000 in partnership with Hutt Racing Stable.

The 11th race favorite is last year's NYSS final winner Tequila Monday (Brian Sears). She's back strong this year for Chris Oakes having annexed the Lismore at Yonkers and copping a third in the rich Fan Hanover final. She'll start from post two on Sunday, seeking to advance for owners North Fork Racing and Chuck Pompey.

Next week's EBC finals are for the biggest purses of the year for NY restricted stakes with the colt stake at \$268,100 while the fillies race for \$262,850.

No fewer than 85 NYSS filly trotters will compete at Tioga on Sunday with one early non-betting race and 10 divisions on the card.

The main event split into three nine filly fields, each for a purse of \$37,966.

Post time on Sunday is 1 p.m. You can find the entries on the Tioga Downs [website](#).