

# Pye on Racing

## 2019 Ohio Fair Column

By Thom Pye



### Williams County wraps up a fine night of racing

Montpelier, Ohio – A new track record for 3-year-old pacers highlighted an evening (September 11<sup>th</sup>) of good miles and exciting finishes when Suzanna Bates and Robyn McGhee's Valparaiso Hanover steamed to a 10 ¾ length victory in 1:57.2. Catch-driven by Greg Bateson for trainer Tyler Bates, the altered son of Dragon Again commanded every station and clipped of an ever-widening lead with a last quarter in :29.3 over Leap For Gold (Odell Cross) and John Moody with Tanner J. The mile was only a fifth of a second off the overall track record of 1:57.1 set by C.C. Spice set in 2003.

Earlier the fans of northwest Ohio were treated to the undefeated (now 12 for 12) 2-year-old gelding trotter Timestorm as the Kent Hess-trainee stormed off to a 38-length win in 2:03.4, a mere two ticks off another track record. Owned by Ted Boschma of South Lyon, Michigan and driven by John Moody the progeny of Stormin Norman was once again barred from the wagering and has now banked over \$47,000 for his freshman year while dominating at all the fairs. He's also set the 2-year-old track record of 1:56.4 at Northfield as well.

Greg Bateson got the seat behind the Mike Conklin prodigy Cousin Louie and the 2-year-old gelding by Big Bad John kept all the relatives happy with a gutsy ¾ length win in 2:02.2 over Worth A Buck (Pierce Henry) and My Name Is Hairy driven by Skip De Mull. The winner of over \$25,000 so far in 2019 sports a record of 9 wins, 3 seconds in 12 starts.

T Degengold grabbed her 9th victory in ten 2019 starts as

Mark Headworth guided the Jeff Nisonger-conditioned 2-year-old filly by Pet Rock to a 3 ¾ length convincing win in 2:00.4 for owner Johnny Kearns of Cardington, Ohio.

And I Get It, trainer/driver/owner Bob Rowland's trotting machine easily put away his competition in the \$9,291 OFRC 3-year-old trot in 2:02.2 by 4 as the Dontyouforgetit gelding took his 11th win in his 12th sophomore season start.

The 3-year-old filly pace kept the crowd on the edge of their seats when the battle began between an ambitious Ambitious Lillian (Mark Headworth) and favorite Atlantic Star (Ed Hennessey) as the 3-year-old filly pacers got to

the half in :58.2 before pocket-sitting I M McCited shook loose and nabbed Lillian by a nose in 2:00.2. It was regular driver Greg Bateson's 3rd win on the night as the Tyler Bates-trained daughter of McArdle paid a hefty \$58.20 to win and several lucky bettors were really McCited.

The evening's program marked the 50th year of veteran official Bill Peter's

announcing at his home track and the man with an amazing memory can quote many a record and performances primarily because he "was there." Ironically 1969 was the year the great Neville Pride set the trotting World Record of 1:56.4 on a half-mile track at Saratoga harness in upstate New York. Of the many numerous track and world records set by the late Stanley Dancer that mark of 1:54.4 was one that he "thought they'd never break."

And 50 years later here we witness a 2-year-old who has equaled that outstanding effort.

Times, and horses, sure do fly.



*The OFRC 2-year-old filly trotters step off the gate as John Konesky III would cut the mile with Cell Service (by Dejarmbro) and take the winners portion of the \$9,291 purse in 2:07.4 at Montpelier. Photo by Thom Pye*