



©2026 Thom Rye

E-NEWS AND E-NOTES FOR MONDAY JANUARY 5th, 2026

THE TOPS OF '25

2025 proved to be a very good year for the Buckeye State as numerous members of its driver and trainer community were ranked nationally.

With the four major tracks in Ohio (Dayton, Northfield, Miami Valley, and Scioto) as well as the 65 County Fairs that offered harness racing during the summer months the echoes of “four-in-a-row in Ohio” reverberated throughout the land. The opportunities to shine were limitless.

For the umpteenth year in a row 47-year-old Cuyahoga Falls-born **Aaron Merriman** led the way with his 922 victories in 4101 starts while he maintained a “batting average” of .378 for the year. He has totaled over 17,000 driving triumphs since he began to team in 1997.

Sitting in third place was **Dan Noble** with 713 trips to the Winners Circle. Part of Xenia’s horse community which spanned 4 generations, the soon-to-be 43-year-old Noble has been on a tear since arriving at Northfield and adds multiple notches to close to 8,600 career tallies. His batting average was a lofty .376.

Right behind Noble in 4th place was Mt. Vernon born **Chris Page** who at 42 had a banner year of 593 wins to add to his almost 7,700 career totals since he began his on-track journey in 2000.

And while we forgive 39-year-old **Ronnie Wrenn Jr** for being Michigan born, the now Chagrin Falls native posted 547 victories to secure himself 6th place in the top ten. Since he began driving in 2008 his numbers are impressive: over 8,960 wins out of 38,800 plus starts as his 2025 batting average rang true at .388 (Ted Williams’ in 1957 at age 39 and you can run and tell that)

Another Buckeye adoptee was P.E.I. native **Drew Neill** who topped the UDR ratings with a .501 mark from the Ohio Fair Circuit in 2025.

Also in the top 10 were **Jeff Nisonger**, **Nick Clegg**, and **Ronnie Gillespie**.

On the training side Columbus native **Virgil Morgan Jr** was 5th in wins with 231. Northfield stalwart **Cory Kreiser** sat 6th with 228 as Chillicothe-born **Steve Carter** was tucked in 7th at 226 as he just missed his high-water mark in earnings from the previous year. **Christi Noble** would have a top Ohio batting average of .442 while Mt Eaton-born **Rosy Weaver** spun a formidable .421 with her training prowess.

Catch the Ohio Champions awards broadcast this Saturday from Westerville
<https://www.harnessracingohio.com/Video>

**WHO WILL BE HORSE OF THE YEAR?
Join the fan vote on the USTrotting
Facebook page**

PACERS

2pc BEAU JANGLES p1:48.3

2pf LOU DIPA p1:48

3pc LOUPRINT p1:46.3

3pf MIKI AND MINNI p1:48.2

aph ERVIN HANOVER p1:46.2

apm TWIN B JOE FRESH p1:47.3

TROTTERS

2tc APEX 1:51.4

2tf SET YOUR SIGHTS HIGH 1:53.1

3tc SUPER CHAPTER 1:50f

3tf YO TILLIE 1:50.2

ath LEXUS CODY 1:49.1

atm WARRAWEE MICHELLE 1:50f

**The Dan Patch Awards are on
February 22nd 2026**

STILL TIME TO VOTE!

His New Year's
Resolution is to be
the leading driver

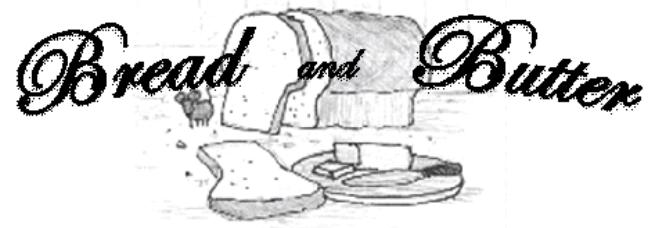
He's in for a
looning Season!



Food for thought...

With the incurrence of COVID 19 and no spectators many Fairs dropped their overnight condition races. While Ohio always had a racetrack for the "cheaper" horses (ie. A place where one could get a race for their non-winning animals. And everyone has one) perhaps OHHA could sponsor one much like the well-received *Signature Series* offering a small entry-added purse where the horsemen could find a place to race their lovable liability. It would not have to be a weekly event but maybe only a summer series where a fan prize of a small TV is offered to those in attendance as all losing tickets are entered into a drawing.

The purse structure does not have to be dynamic, and it would return the Fairs to their grassroots beginnings. As one OHHA Director noted with tears welling in his eyes that he had to explain to his youngest why the family favorite had to move on as it wasn't feasible to keep the non-racing horse.



**FOR HORSES THAT HAVE NOT EARNED THEIR
BREAD & BUTTER THESE PAST FEW YEARS: NW2
RACES IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS (WINNERS
HIGHER THAN A \$5,000 CLAIMER NOT ELIGIBLE)
AE: \$4,000 CLAIMERS**

Entries at Race Secretary's discretion.

The great American humorist Will Rogers (1879-1935) had one... the kids called him "Dopey" and he was a mainstay of Rogers' Ziegfeld Follies act when he appeared in NY City. A little round-bellied coal black pony with glass eyes, became a family pet. Dopey would come in the house on Long Island and even go upstairs. He was intelligent, gentle, and Will said he never made a wrong move, never hurt anybody in his life even as they tugged on his ears & tail. They all learned to ride on Dopey.