

Harness Racing Notebook: Zweig Memorial edition

by Ellen Harvey and Ken Weingartner, Harness Racing Communications

Freehold, NJ --- Douglass Hutchins is hoping for another happy hour in a Zweig Memorial.

Hutchins bred and owns Martiniwithmuscle, who is among the nine horses entered in Friday's (Aug. 29) \$340,000 Dr. Harry M. Zweig Memorial for 3-year-old male trotters at Vernon Downs. Martiniwithmuscle will start from post five with driver Tim Tetrick and is 8-1 on the morning line.

Seven years ago, Hutchins watched Martiniwithmuscle's mom, Cocktail Hour, win a filly division of the Zweig Memorial at Tioga Downs.

"Maybe he can follow in her footsteps," said Hutchins, a veterinarian from Maine. "It's probably farfetched, but we'll take a shot. He's probably a little over his head right now, but he's well-bred and well cared for."



Lisa photo

Martiniwithmuscle has won five of 13 career races and earned \$52,695.

Martiniwithmuscle, who has won five of 13 career races and earned \$52,695, will face a Zweig field that includes Father Patrick and Nuncio, two million-dollar-earners from the stable of trainer Jimmy Takter. The entry is the 5-2 morning line favorite. (See additional story below.)

Limited to four starts at age 2 because of allergies, Martiniwithmuscle started this season with back-to-back wins in conditioned races at the Meadowlands. Three starts later, he finished second to Trixton in the New Jersey Sire Stakes championship and

Hutchins was aiming for an appearance in the Hambletonian.

But Martiniwithmuscle went off stride in his next two starts, a conditioned race and the Stanley Dancer Memorial, and returned to Maine for evaluation.

"I'd hoped to race in the Hambletonian, but he made those two breaks, which I couldn't explain," Hutchins said. "He seemed a little stressed (in New Jersey) maybe. We brought him home and couldn't find anything. He didn't seem sore.

"We brought him back to Maine and he seems a lot happier. We changed his shoeing a little bit. I think he's just happier with (trainer Ivan Davies) up in Maine where he's been. He's been with Ivan for quite a bit. You've got to keep your horses happy."

Martiniwithmuscle returned to his winning ways after the brief respite. With Davies handling the driving, he won a conditioned start at Plainridge Racecourse on Aug. 6 and heads to the Zweig off a 9-1/2 length victory in 1:55.1 in the Open at Plainridge on Aug. 20.

"I don't think he's shown his true potential yet," Hutchins said about Martiniwithmuscle, who is a son of stallion [Muscle Hill](#) and whose maternal family includes 1986 Hambletonian Oaks winner and multiple Breeders Crown champion JEF's Spice. "He went really good last week, so we're hoping for a pretty good race in the Zweig, although he's probably not in the same category as Father Patrick or Nuncio."

Martiniwithmuscle's remaining stakes schedule includes the Bluegrass Stakes and Kentucky Futurity in Lexington, plus the Yonkers Trot and Breeders Crown.

"For as little racing he got last year, he showed a lot of potential," Hutchins said. "He's always had a fluid gait to him. He's been a great-gaited colt all along. I think he's done pretty well this year, all things considered."

Following is the Zweig field in post order with drivers, trainers and morning line: 1. Flyhawk El Durado, Mark MacDonald, Mark Ford, 7-2; 2. Sumatra, Brian Sears, Tom Fanning, 7-2; 3. Expressive Action, David Miller, John Grasso, 10-1; 4. Skates N Plates, Jim Morrill Jr., Trond Smedshammer, 6-1; 5. Martiniwithmuscle, Tim Tetrick, Ivan Davies, 8-1; 6. Auspicious Hanover, Charlie Norris, Charlie Norris, 10-1; 7. Nuncio, John Campbell, Jimmy Takter, 5-2; 8. Father Patrick, Yannick Gingras, Jimmy Takter, 5-2; 9. Resolve, Corey Callahan, Nancy Johansson, 8-1.

Nuncio and Father Patrick will race as an entry.

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Hambletonian runner-up Nuncio is part of the favored 5-2 Jimmy Takter-trained entry with stablemate Father Patrick in Friday's \$340,000 Dr. Harry M. Zweig Memorial for 3-year-old male trotters at Vernon Downs. Nuncio has post seven and the services of his regular driver, John Campbell, right next to Father Patrick in post eight.

Nuncio got a pre-Zweig warmup Tuesday (Aug. 26), with a 3-1/4 length victory in 1:53.2 in a division of the Pennsylvania Sire Stakes at The Meadows. The victory came in wire-to-wire fashion from post seven, something the now more mature and well-schooled Nuncio handles nicely.



Chris Gooden photo

Nuncio won his PA Sire Stakes race in 1:53.2 on Aug. 26 with John Campbell in the bike.

"The difference is, at the beginning of this year and at the end of last year, when he did go to the front he wouldn't relax," Campbell said. "Now we've raced him from behind a number of times and we've got him so he realizes he doesn't have to do everything in the first half."

"When you do go to the front with him now, he's not trying to run through his bridle and he's relaxing. That's what we had to try to get through to him at the beginning of the year. Fortunately for us, he caught on rather well."

Nuncio was making his first start since his second-place finish to stablemate Trixton in the Aug. 2 Hambletonian at the Meadowlands. Campbell and the colt were able to control the fractions, which was important given the quick turnaround to the Zweig.

"He didn't have to work too hard and he did it rather easily," Campbell said. "I was certainly cognizant of the fact that he was going to have to come back and race Friday. I didn't want to race him hard and it did work out that way."

Nuncio has won six of nine races this year and earned \$613,346 for owner Stall TZ. He has won 11 of 19 career races, never finished worse than second in any start, and earned \$1.07 million.

Father Patrick, who has won 16 of 19 career races and \$1.27 million, will try in the Zweig to snap the first losing streak of his career. He went off stride at the start of the Hambletonian and wound up last in the field of 11 and finished second to Datsyuk on Aug. 17 in a division of the Tompkins-Geers at Tioga Downs.

"The only thing I can really count on with Nuncio is from the first time I raced him, even when he was unratable, he always raced his heart out," Campbell said. "He's raced good every time. Going into the (Zweig) I expect him to again. Whether that's good enough and how good Father Patrick is, we don't know. But I expect him to go his race and if Father Patrick does beat him, he's going to be tough to beat."

Campbell is back in the U.S. after a visit last week to Solvalla Racetrack in Sweden for the "Legends" race in which he competed alongside renowned drivers of Europe. While there, he was reunited with 1987 and 1988 Horse of the Year Mack Lobell, with whom he won the Hambletonian and the Elitlopp when the horse was 4, a feat never duplicated before or since.

The two met at Mack's home at Menhammar Stud and later that day [in a tribute to the now 30-year-old Mack at the track](#).

"He's got so much energy and his coat was so shiny, he just feels so good," Campbell said. "He was right up on his toes when he went down in front of the grandstand in front of the people.

"It made me feel so good to be part of that. To see him again, and the reception he got from the people was just incredible. They just love that horse over there. He's just so full of himself. We went up to see him at the farm in the morning and it felt so good to see what a great home he had. When you see what a great spot he's got -- he's the king around there. His coat is so shiny and all the energy he had was good to see.

"When we were at the farm they asked me to take ahold of him for some pictures, but he was watching Anette (his caretaker, Anette Jonsson) the whole time. He didn't want her to get far away; I found that rather amusing. There are two girls that look after him and he's rather attached to both of them."

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Shake It Cerry is the 5-2 morning line favorite in the \$150,000 Dr. Harry M. Zweig Memorial for 3-year-old female trotters. She will start from post six for trainer Jimmy Takter and driver Ron Pierce.



USTA/Mark Hall photo

Shake It Cerry has earned \$1.14 million in her career.

A daughter of [Donato Hanover](#)-Solveig, Shake It Cerry has won seven of nine races this year, including the Delvin Miller Memorial on July 12. She is coming off a 1:53.1 win in her division of the Pennsylvania Sire Stakes at The Meadows on Aug. 12.

For her career, Shake It Cerry has won 15 of 20 career races and earned \$1.14 million. She was the 2013 Dan Patch Award winner for best 2-year-old female trotter.

[Broadway Socks](#), who will start the Zweig's filly division from post No. 1 with Dan Rawlings at the lines for trainer David Wade, is the 7-2 second choice. She has won six of nine races this year, including divisions of the Arden Downs and Currier & Ives stakes.

She most recently was second to Lifetime Pursuit in a world-record-equaling 1:51.3 mile in their division of the Pennsylvania Sire Stakes at The Meadows on Aug. 12.

The full field in post order with drivers, trainers, and morning line: 1. Broadway Socks, Dan Rawlings, David Wade, 7-2; 2. Avalicious, Jim Morrill Jr., Ron Burke, 9-2; 3. Bikini So Teeny, Charlie Norris, Charlie Norris, 10-1; 4. Heaven's Door, Ake Svanstedt, Ake Svanstedt, 8-1; 5. Crediamo, Tim Tetrick, Trond Smedshammer, 6-1; 6. Shake It Cerry, Ron Pierce, Jimmy Takter, 5-2; 7. Struck By Lindy, Brian Sears, R. Nifty Norman, 10-1; 8. Slice Slice Baby, Mark MacDonald, Erv Miller, 12-1; 9. Passing Jetta, Corey Callahan, Jonas Czernyson, 8-1.

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Friday's card at Vernon also includes the \$236,000 Crawford Farms Open Trot, where Sebastian K is the 5-2 morning line favorite. Trained and driven by Ake Svanstedt, he will start the Crawford from post five.



USTA/Mark Hall photo

Sebastian K is the 5-2 morning line favorite in the Crawford Farms Open Trot.

Sebastian K is making his first start since winning the John Cashman Jr. Memorial on Aug. 2 at the Meadowlands in a world-record-equaling 1:50 for a mile racetrack. The Swedish-bred star has won seven of eight races this year, his first season in North America. He trotted the fastest mile in history, 1:49, in winning the Sun Invitational on June 28 at five-eighths-mile Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs.

Two-time Dan Patch Award winner Market Share is the 7-2 second choice in the Crawford. He will start from the second tier, post 10, with Tim Tetrick driving for trainer Linda Toscano.

Market Share finished second to Sebastian K in the Cashman. His wins include the Maxie Lee Memorial Invitational, which he captured in a then-world-record 1:50.2 at Harrah's Philadelphia. For his career, Market Share has won 24 of 49 starts and \$3.43 million. His earnings are 17th best among all trotters in history.

Bee A Magician, [the only female in the race](#), is 6-1 on the morning line. She will start from post three with driver Brian Sears at the controls for trainer Nifty Norman.